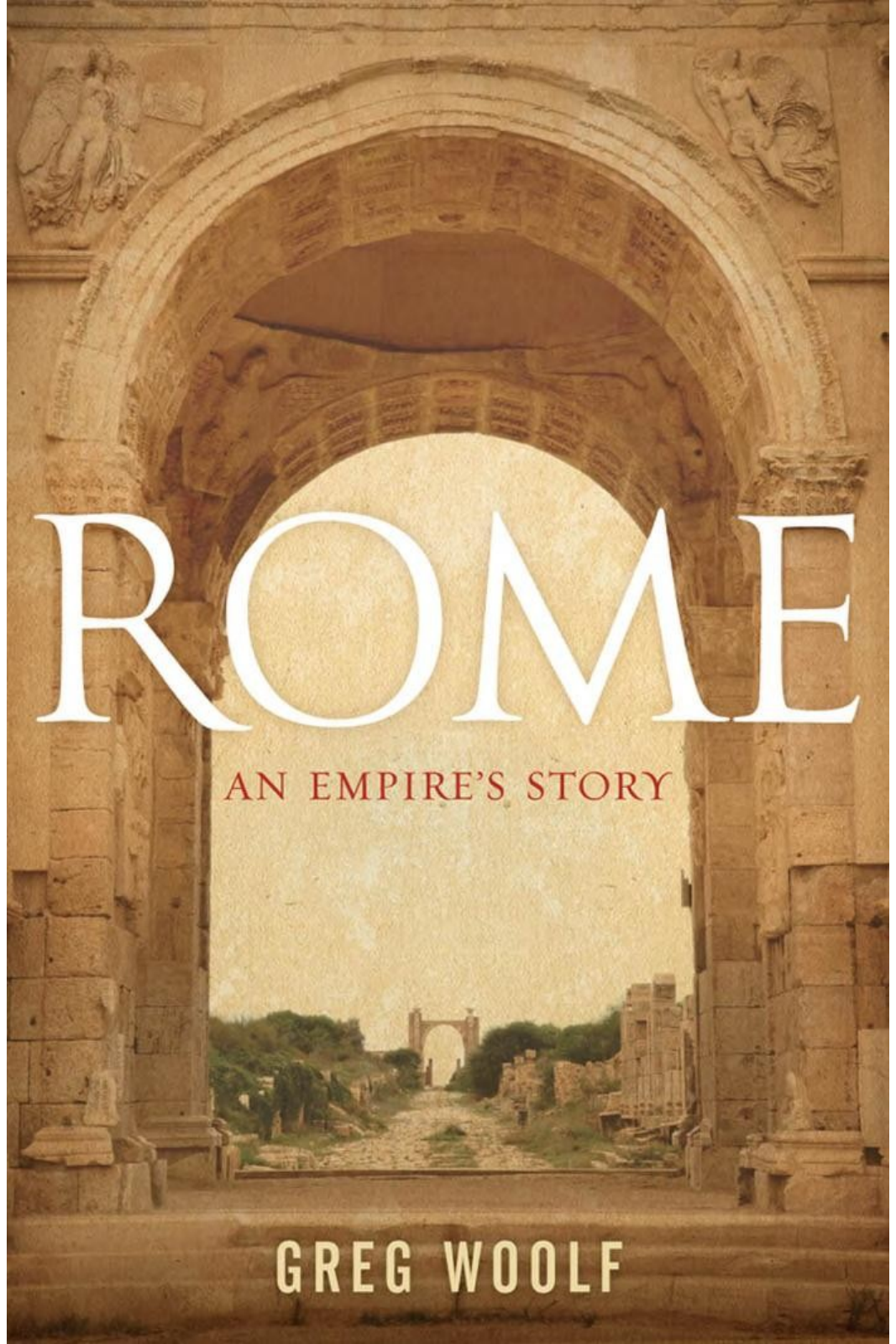




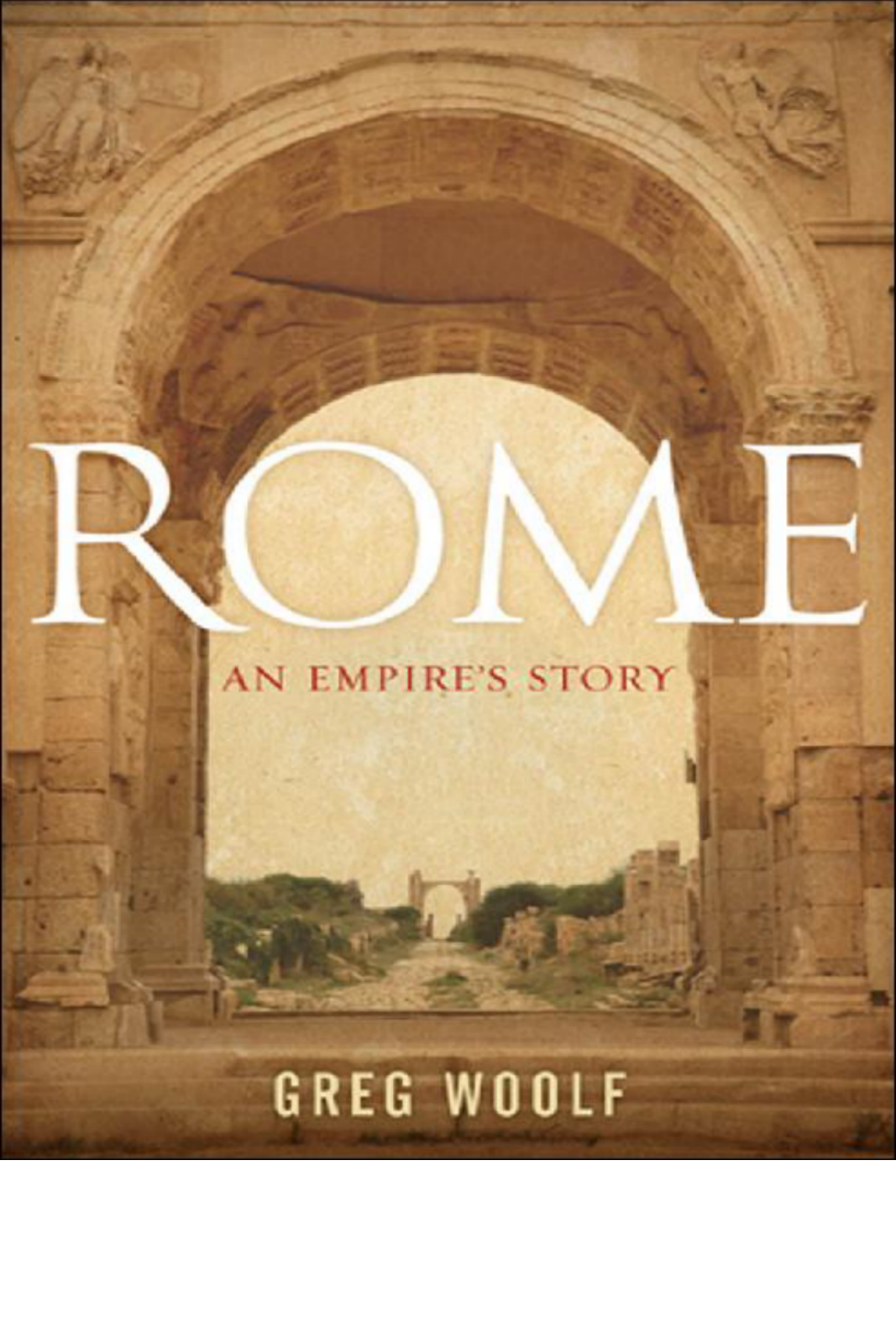
ROME

AN EMPIRE'S STORY

GREG WOOLF

VISIT...

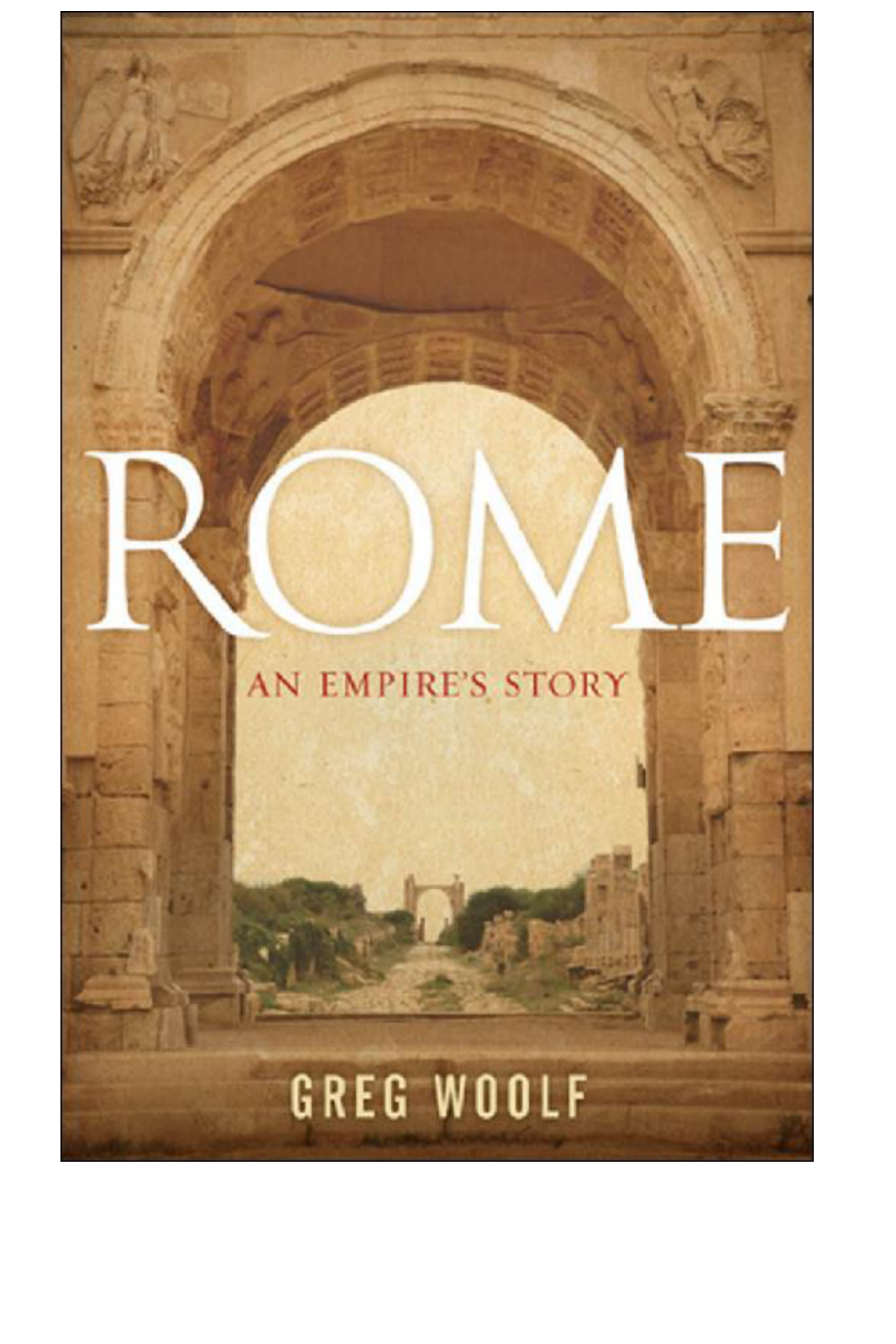
LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM



ROME

AN EMPIRE'S STORY

GREG WOOLF



ROME

AN EMPIRE'S STORY

GREG WOOLF

ROME

ROME

AN EMPIRE'S STORY

GREG WOOLF

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research,
scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade
mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

© Greg Woolf 2012

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

First Edition published in 2012

Impression: 1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in
a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,
without the
prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly
permitted
by law, by licence or under terms agreed with the appropriate
reprographics
rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the
scope of the
above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University
Press, at the
address above

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Library of Congress Control Number: 2012930500

ISBN 978-0-19-960308-4

Printed in Great Britain
on acid-free paper by
Clays Ltd, St Ives plc

For my Students

Preface

All histories of Rome are histories of empire. Her rise to power, the long peace, and the even longer decline together form the background to every story told about the Romans. My subject, however, is empire itself. How did it grow? What enabled it to resist defeats and capitalize on victories? Why did Rome succeed when its rivals failed? How did empire survive crises, dig itself in, and replace chaotic campaigns of conquest with stability? How did empire come to coordinate the great flows of wealth and populations on which it depended? How did it evolve to face new needs and new threats? Why did it falter, regain its balance, and then shrink under a series of military blows until it was, once again, a city-state? What circumstances and technologies made the creation and maintenance of an empire possible, in just this place and just at that time? What institutions, habits, and beliefs suited Rome for the role? And what did the fact of empire do to all the beliefs, habits, and institutions with which the world had been conquered? What part did chance play in its successes and its failures?

The long arc that stretches from a scatter of villages on the Tiber River to a medieval city on the Bosphorus Straits dreaming of ancient glory takes a millennium and a half. Telling that story in a single volume is perhaps a crazy endeavour, but it has also been an exhilarating one. Perhaps Roman history has no special claim on us, among the many periods of the past we can think about, and that have shaped our world. But as a student I felt the fascination of studying something so vast, an entity that stretched over so much time and space. What could sustain a human enterprise conceived on such a vast scale? How could anything human last so long? Our own world experiences change at an extraordinary rate. Earlier generations, confident of the permanence of their own empires and of the uninterrupted march of progress, were spellbound by Rome's decline and fall. For us it is the longevity of Rome that grasps the imagination. My own fascination has not diminished since my student days. Even now the Roman world still sometimes feels like a vast sandpit in which I can play, or else a huge historical laboratory in which all sorts of long-lived processes and entities can be studied. Roman history is like astronomy in that respect. New experiments cannot be designed and carried out. But a vast mass of distant and ancient phenomena can be observed through tiny packets of residual data, and the forces and

cataclysmic events that formed the observable universe can be reconstructed. Like astronomers, ancient historians look for patterns and try to explain them. This book is an attempt to explain those that I have observed.

The Roman Empire invites metaphor. Ancients often used a biological analogy: each empire or state had its youth, its maturity, and its old age. One modern historian has used the metaphor of the vampire bat, seeing the empire as a means through which the Romans sucked the life out of peasants and slaves upon whose labour the empire depended. The Roman Empire does not seem to me much like an organic entity, unless it is an epidemic spreading throughout a host population feeding off the energies of the infected until it burns itself out. Analogies from natural science seem to capture the pattern of empire better. The Roman Empire was like a great tidal wave sweeping up more and more water before dissipating its energy. Or it was an avalanche, starting small, accelerated by the patterns of snow and rock across which it moved, and then slowed again at the base of the slope. Either metaphor captures the sense of a grand pattern that starts small, draws in more matter and more energy, and then dissipates. That pattern—empire—moves through time, and for a while crowds out other patterns, until it dissipates or is overwritten by other great movements. Empire grows, not always smoothly, dominates for a while, and then abates. One former vice-chancellor of St Andrews suggested that I think of this in terms of resonance, the gradual establishment of a pattern of vibration across a vast mass of people and things that eventually loses coherence and breaks down into smaller patterns. That does seem to capture precisely the emergence of an imperial order and its subsequent dissipation. The essence of empire is the assertion of a great pattern at the expense of smaller ones. That pattern is typically less equal and more hierarchical than what went before. New levels of complexity mean some of the rich becoming richer, some of the poor being subjected to harsher discipline, although the social mobility that empire stirs up means there are winners and losers at every level. Materially the pattern of empire involves regular movements of people and things, great flows of taxes and of commercial goods. Those routines of movement are now reflected by traces of roads and ports, the fossilized skeleton around which the soft matter of the human empire once hung. I have tried to give attention to the hard matter. But one of the joys of Roman history is that we can also hear the voices of so many of those caught up in it. I have attempted to capture and report their perceptions of empire as well.

Writing this book I have tried to hold in my mind this sense that empire is a movement through historical time, not a fixed set of

institutions. By the end of my story, in Byzantium, everything has changed. Romans speak Greek instead of Latin, the capital is now in what was once a conquered province, and barbarians rule in the old city of Rome. It has a new god, new customs, a new sense of its past and its future. A world of cities had become (again) the world ruled by a single city. Istanbul derives ultimately, from the medieval Greek phrase *eis ten Polin*, ‘into the City’. Yet it was still Rome.

All the same, some institutions were, for long periods, absolutely central to the long history of empire, and in important ways the world within which Roman power was extended and then contracted was a stable one. I have tried to capture this combination of constant evolution with long-lasting structural stability by alternating chapters that carry the story forward with chapters that allow me to stand back for a moment—out of time as it were—and point out something of enduring significance. Attentive readers will notice, as I have, that this division does not absolutely hold. But every so often historians have to make concessions to their material. Another concession to my material is the lists of key dates that precede each narrative chapter: the Romans’ journey was complex as well as long, and as we sit in the passenger seat, the odd road map is occasionally helpful.

Metaphors are one kind of inspiration. Comparison is another. This book is not an exercise in systematic comparative history, measuring Rome against other ancient (or for that matter modern) empires. Comparison is an interesting method, but it is fantastically difficult given the gaps in our knowledge of ancient empires, and the inconvenience that from one empire to another they are not usually the same gaps. But my argument is informed by reflecting on other empires, sometimes trying to spot a general trend, more often as a way of spotting what is unusual or even unique about the Roman case. Wide reading helps, but I am very conscious how much I have learned from participating at conferences and meetings at which experts in other disciplines have generously shared their knowledge. From many such occasions, I would like to single out a conference organized by Susan Alcock, Terry D’Altroy, Kathy Morrison, and Carla Sinopoli at Las Mijas in 1997, generously funded by the Wenner-Gren Foundation, that first gave me the idea for this project, and also an entire series of workshops devoted to the comparative study of empires, organized with extraordinary energy by Peter Fibiger Bang, with funding from the European Science Foundation under COST Action A36 ‘Tributary Empires Compared’.

My understanding also depends, of course, on the research of numerous other historians of Rome. It is impossible to acknowledge all of those whose works have been inspirations or essential guides or both. This book is not a total history of Rome, but an exploration of

the theme of empire. All the same, empire is so central to Roman history that I have drawn on a great fund of published works to write it. I have tried in the notes and suggestions for Further Reading to indicate just a few to which I owe a particular debt, and I have tried to indicate recent work above all else, since we have now such good syntheses of past scholarship and since research is moving so fast in this field. Most of this book was written in St Andrews during leave generously funded by the Leverhulme Trust. But parts of it were drafted at UNICAMP, São Paulo, where I was a Visiting Professor in early 2011 at the invitation of Pedro Paulo Funari. The first draft was completed later that same year at the Max Weber Kolleg of the University of Erfurt, where Jörg Rüpke was (once again) my host.

Many others have contributed to making it possible to write this book. I would like to thank especially my agent Georgina Capel, for encouragement and much more; Stefan Vranka and Matthew Cotton at Oxford University Press for their patience, advice, and enthusiasm; Stefan again and Nate Rosenstein for detailed comments on an earlier draft which has saved me from many errors and made this book much more readable; Emma Barber, Emmanuelle Peri, and Jackie Pritchard at Oxford for their help in the various stages of production; my family for tolerance and reality checks. This is not, of course, my first attempt to explain the larger patterns behind Rome's imperial history. Reading and contemplation are all very well, but every teacher knows that the true test of understanding is whether or not one can explain an idea to someone else. Professional historians usually try out explanations on each other. But we know too much already, and as listeners and critics we are often too charitable. Any aptitude I have acquired in explanation, I owe to successive generations of students in Cambridge and Leicester, Oxford and St Andrews. For this reason, this book is dedicated to them, with thanks.

Contents

List of Illustrations

List of Maps

Notes on Further Reading

1. The Whole Story
2. Empires of the Mind
3. Rulers of Italy
4. Imperial Ecology
5. Mediterranean Hegemony
6. Slavery and Empire
7. Crisis
8. At Heaven's Command?
9. The Generals
10. The Enjoyment of Empire
11. Emperors
12. Resourcing Empire
13. War
14. Imperial Identities
15. Recovery and Collapse
16. A Christian Empire
17. Things Fall Apart
18. The Roman Past and the Roman Future

Notes

Bibliography

Glossary of Technical Terms

Photographic Acknowledgements

Index

List of Illustrations

1. The Prima Porta Augustus displayed in the Braccio Nuovo new wing of Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican Museums, Rome, Italy
2. A Mercury Dime, depicting the Roman *fascēs*
3. A bust of Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, Roman copy after a Greek original, from the Villa of the Papyri, Ercolano (ancient Herculaneum), Campania Region, Italy
4. The monument at Delphi that commemorated Aemilius Paullus' victory at Pydna
5. The sarcophagus of Scipio Barbatus, Museo Pio-Clementino, Vatican
6. A slave collar (original in the Museo Nazionale Romano, Terme di Diocleziano in Rome)
7. Mithridates VI Eupator King of Pontus portrayed as Hercules
8. Bronze statuette of Cybele on a cart drawn by lions, 2nd half of 2nd century AD
9. Bust of Sulla in the Munich Glyptothek
10. Bust of Julius Caesar
11. The theatre of Pompey
12. One of the fresco wall paintings in the *cubiculum* (bedroom) from the Villa of P. Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale
13. The Empress Messalina and her son Britannicus, AD 45, Roman sculpture, marble, Louvre
14. The Roman ceremony of the *Adventus* depicted on a coin
15. The tax law of Ephesus (now in Ephesus Museum)
16. A detail of Trajan's Column showing triumph of the emperor after the first campaign against the Dacians
17. Hadrian's Wall
18. The Stabian Baths at Pompeii
19. Porphyry statue of the Four Tetrarchs at the Basilica di San Marco, St Mark's Square, Venice, Italy
20. An image from the late antique *Notitia Dignitatum*

21. The basilica, formerly Emperor Constantine's throne room, now a Protestant church, Trier
22. The head of a gigantic statue of Emperor Constantine in the Palazzo dei Conservatori at the Capitoline Museum, Rome
23. A mosaic portraying the Emperor Justinian from San Vitale, Ravenna
24. The amphitheatre at Arles

List of Maps

1. The peoples of Italy around 300 BC
2. The Mediterranean and its continental hinterlands, showing major mountain ranges and rivers
3. The Republican empire around 100 BC
4. The Roman empire at its greatest extent in the second century AD
5. The third-century crisis
6. The empire in the year 500 AD
7. Justinian's reconquest (AD 565)

Notes on Further Reading

The Roman Empire has been the object of serious research for around a century and a half and imperialism has never been off the agenda. It would be impossible to provide a complete guide to the scholarship on which this book is based, and I have not tried to do so. Each chapter is followed, however, by a few suggestions for further reading. I have recommended only work available in English and have tried to pick the most exciting and most recent works, since new research continues at an astonishing pace. I have also added a few notes to each chapter, some identifying the source of particular quotations or key passages of ancient writers, some acknowledging the source of particular ideas or acknowledging books or articles that were especially helpful when I was writing the chapter. Here too I have concentrated on the most recent work, but I have included a few really crucial items written in other languages. After all, the study of antiquity is an international venture, and the Roman Empire is bigger than any of us.

The bibliography at the end of the volume gathers together all works cited, but cannot claim to be a comprehensive guide to the subject. Fortunately in the twenty-first century we benefit from a number of very recent and authoritative reference works on all aspects of Roman history. The best one-volume reference work to all aspects of antiquity is the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (4th edn. 2011). The revised *Cambridge Ancient History* devotes seven volumes to Rome (1989–2005). The first volume of the *New Cambridge Mediaeval History* (2005) is also relevant to the end of this story, as is the *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire* (2008), the *Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World* (2007), and the first volume of the *Cambridge History of World Slavery* (2011). Harvard's *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Post-Classical World* (1999) combines thematic essays with a dictionary. The best multi-volume dictionary is Brill's *New Pauly* (2007). All these works are available on-line, as well as in hard copy. The *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World* (2000) is the best guide to the topography of antiquity.

KEY DATES IN CHAPTER I

- 753 bc** Traditional date of the foundation of Rome
- 509 bc** Traditional date of the expulsion of the kings and the foundation of the *Roman Republic*
- 264 bc** Punic Wars begins. Hannibal invades Italy but fails to break Roman hegemony
- 216 bc** Battle of Cannae. Rome's worst defeat at the hands of Hannibal
- 146 bc** Carthage and Corinth sacked by Roman armies
- 81 bc** Sulla marches on Rome and makes himself dictator
- 44 bc** Julius Caesar assassinated on the Ides of March
- 31 bc** Battle of Actium ends the civil wars of the late Republic. Conventional beginning of the early empire or *Principate*
- Death of Augustus**, and accession of Tiberius
- Death of Trajan** marks the greatest extent of the Roman Empire
- Caracalla** extends citizenship to most inhabitants of the empire
- The 235-284**, a prolonged period of military crisis
- Reign of Diocletian**. Conventional beginning of *Later Roman Empire*
- Reign of Constantine**
- Constantine's Edict of Toleration**
- Julian** attempts to restore the worship of the ancestral gods
- Battle of Adrianople**. Eastern empire's army defeated by Goths
- Last Western emperor** deposed by Ostrogoths
- Attila** attempts to reconquer the west
- Arabs** defeat Roman forces at Yarmuk
- Arabs** cross the Straits of Gibraltar, invading Visigothic Spain

I

THE WHOLE STORY

Traditions about what happened before the foundation of the City, or while it was being founded, are more suited for poetic fictions than for the trustworthy records of history.

(Livy, *From the Foundation of the City* Preface)

The story of Rome is long one. This chapter tells it all—at breakneck speed—hitting just the high spots of the millennium-and-a-half-year story of rise and fall. It is intended as a motorway route planner for the book, or a set of satellite images, snapped at long intervals, provided for orientation. If you already know the pattern of the Roman past, feel free to skip ahead. If not, enjoy the ride!

The Kings and the Free Republic

The Romans of the historical period believed that their city had been founded by Romulus at a date that corresponds to our 753 BC. Romulus was the first of seven kings. The earlier kings were honoured as founding fathers, the later ones reviled as tyrants. Eventually the last of the kings, Tarquin the Proud, was driven out of Rome and a Republic was founded. The conventional date for this was 509 BC. After Aeneas and Romulus, this was something like the third foundation of Rome. Its hero was a Brutus. When Julius Caesar made himself dictator for life nearly 500 years later, it was on the base of statues of this first Brutus that graffiti were scrawled, calling on his distant descendant to take up arms and slay the tyrant.

All the surviving accounts of the period of the Regal Period have this mythic quality. None was written less than three centuries after the supposed foundation of the Republic. Rome in the late sixth century was well below the radar of the Greeks, who would not begin to write even their own history for another century. Yet it is probable enough that Romans did have a monarchy. Many other Mediterranean cities had monarchs in the archaic age, including many of the cities of Etruria just north of Rome. Many of the later institutions of Rome seem best explained as relics of a monarchical state: there was a sacred house in the forum called the *Regia*, the base of the most senior priest the *pontifex maximus*. The official who conducted elections if

there was a gap between magistrates was the *interrex*. But few of the details that have been passed down can be trusted. Individual kings were remembered as founders of specific parts of the Roman state. Romulus created the city, populated it, first by declaring it an asylum for criminals, and then by organizing the mass kidnapping of Sabine women to provide wives for his followers. Numa, the second king, invented Roman religion. Servius Tullius organized the army, the tribes, and the census and so on. Stories about the later rulers mostly recall tales told about tyrants across the ancient Mediterranean: they were arrogant rulers and cruel, sexual predators, and weak sons followed strong fathers. Charges of this kind were common in the aristocratic republics of the archaic Mediterranean and represent the emergence of new ethics of civil conduct. The Romans also remembered their last kings as foreigners, specifically as Etruscans. Stories about the kings added up to an account of what was central and unique to Rome, at least in the minds of those who told and heard them. Our only real control on these myths is archaeological.

The Republican period lasted nearly five centuries, from the early sixth until the final century BC. It was later remembered as an age of liberty and piety. Those who enjoyed that liberty were the wealthy, especially the aristocratic families which together monopolized political office and religious leadership. The nostalgia of their heirs colours all our history of that period. A few families—the Corneli Scipiones above all, then later the Caecilii Metelli—were so successful that they effectively dominated the state, rather as the Medici dominated Renaissance Florence. But the source of their wealth was very different. Those who led Rome's conquest of the Mediterranean world brought back treasure with which to beautify the city, money with which to buy or occupy land, and slaves with whom to farm it. Rome, like most ancient cities, relied on citizen soldiers. At first most of them were peasants who would join campaigns organized for periods of relative quiet in the agricultural year. Many of them did well out of conquest, and those who lived near enough the city had some influence in the political assemblies that elected Rome's leaders and made the greatest decisions, such as whether or not to go to war. But Rome never approached the kind of democracy created in classical Athens, where the wealthy were compelled to conceal their riches and to spend part of them on public projects. At Rome power remained in the hands of the few. Magistracies lasted for only a year, but former magistrates sat for life in a council, the Senate, which in effect directed government, legislation, state cult, and foreign policy. How the Republican aristocracy remained so dominant is one of the big questions of Roman history. Was it the institution of patronage that pervaded Roman society? Or the religious authority they acquired

from their priestly functions? Other cities faced revolutions when disaffected aristocrats roused up the people against their rivals. Roman nobles were as competitive as any aristocracy, but somehow restrained themselves from infighting until the very end of the Republic. When that restraint collapsed, their world fell apart.

The Republic was also the age in which Rome was transformed from an Italian city-state to the leading power in the ancient Mediterranean world. The kings must have left Rome relatively powerful. The scale of the walls, the probable size of the population, but most of all the early military successes all suggest Rome was already one of the politically powerful cities of central Italy around the year 500 BC. The history of the first few centuries is hazy, but by the start of the third century BC, Rome's influence extended throughout the Italian peninsula. Colonies dotted strategic points in the Apennines and on the Tyrrhenian Coast, while new roads had opened up communications to the Adriatic. Over the fourth and third centuries Rome fought on all fronts: Gauls to the north, Greeks in the south, a series of Italic peoples in the mountains of the Abruzzi and the arid plains of the Messogiorno. In the 270s they attracted the attention of King Pyrrhus of Epirus, who crossed the Adriatic with a large army. Rome was defeated by him in several battles, but survived the war. By the end of the third century, Romans had won two long wars against Phoenician (Punic) Carthage. The first (264–241 BC) was largely a naval war in which Rome captured Sicily, and became master of the Greek and Punic cities on the island as well as the indigenous Sicilian peoples of the interior. The second Punic war (218–201) was fought in Spain and Africa as well as in Italy itself. Hannibal crossed the Alps in 217 BC and the next year inflicted a terrifying defeat on Rome at Cannae. But he did not press home his advantage and lingered in southern Italy until 203 when he had to return to Africa to face Scipio's army. Hannibal's defeat at Zama the next year marked the end of Carthaginian power. During the second century BC, Roman armies marched even further afield. They took on and defeated the great Macedonian kingdoms of the east, the heirs of Alexander the Great. Carthage and the ancient Greek city of Corinth were both razed to the ground in 146 BC. Roman armies defeated Gallic tribes north and south of the Alps, waged war on the Spanish Meseta, and resisted German invasions. The city grew and grew in size, was equipped with aqueducts and basilicas and other monuments paid from the spoils of war. The wealthy became even wealthier, citizen armies spent longer and longer away from home.

Romans of the later periods imagined that at its height the Republic was a harmonious system in which the ambitions of the mighty were guided by the wisdom of the Senate, with the support of

a deferential people. The ruin of the Republic was attributed (in different ways) to the luxury and arrogance brought by empire. For the early imperial historian Velleius Paterculus

The first Scipio paved the way for Roman domination, the second opened the door to luxury.¹

Others historians chose other watersheds, but the pattern of virtuous rise followed by vicious fall was a commonplace. The truth is more complex. Social conflicts of one sort or another occurred throughout Roman history. But the urban violence and civil wars that began at the end of the second century BC were on a new scale. The last century of the free Republic was at once the period of greatest territorial expansion, the period in which Roman literary and intellectual culture achieved its classic form, and also 100 years of bloody civil war. Conflicts between Romans and their Italian allies became conflated with social struggles between the poor (or those who claimed to represent them) and the rest of the wealthy. Traditional rivalries between aristocrats were supercharged by the proceeds of imperialism. Politicians recruited first mobs, and then armies to fight their corners.

A destructive feedback loop was created between competition at home and aggressive warfare abroad. Generals thought in the short term, with an eye always on opportunities when they returned. They took spectacular risks, attacked Rome's neighbours without the permission of Senate or people, handed over conquered territories to be exploited by their political allies, and gave little thought to the long-term security of Rome. Foreign allies of dubious loyalty were allowed to build huge power bases on the frontiers. Romans were loathed in the provinces. The low point came when Mithridates, the King of Pontus, a former Roman ally whose power had been built up by Rome and whose increasingly aggressive actions had been ignored by a Senate preoccupied with Italian affairs, invaded Roman-controlled western Asia Minor. At Mithridates' command 10,000 Italians were slaughtered in the Greek cities of the province. Rome briefly lost control of all territories east of the Adriatic. This was just another opportunity for Roman generals. Sulla was first given the army, and then deprived of it, but he refused to step down and instead marched his soldiers on Rome. The forum ran with blood, and he got his way, and after organizing Rome as he saw fit marched east, where he sacked Athens, before returning to fight his way back into Rome. Declaring himself dictator he then 'proscribed' a list of political enemies. Anyone whose name was on the list could be killed without punishment, and their property was forfeit. Sulla was a model for all those generals who came after, including his lieutenant Pompey, his

enemy Caesar, and those who came after Caesar including the future Emperor Augustus. All of these acquired great armies for foreign wars, and ultimately used them to campaign against each other in the provinces, while spending money in Rome on political faction and grand monuments. Conflict came to a stop at the battle of Actium in 31 BC, with the defeat of Mark Antony and Cleopatra by Caesar's heir Octavian, later rebranded as Augustus in a conscious attempt to make civil war (and with it aristocratic liberty and the power of the people) history.

The Early Empire

The long reign of the first emperor, Augustus—he died in AD 14—is the fulcrum of Roman history. Before him there was the Republic: after him only emperors. The 300 years that followed are known as the early empire or (after Augustus' other title of First Citizen, *princeps*) the Principate.

Much of Augustus' way of running Rome was really a continuation of the main themes of Republican history, and this was exactly the way he wanted it to be seen. Once his own position in Rome was secure, and the civil war armies had been largely demobilized, he engaged on campaigns of conquest and civic building on scales that surpassed the achievements of Pompey and Caesar. At his accession, Rome dominated the Mediterranean through a network of provinces and alliances. But civil war and aristocratic rivalry had started many wars beyond the region that remained unresolved. Augustus extended Roman direct rule across half of Europe to the rivers Rhine and Danube, fixed a boundary, and made peace with the Persian Empire. On Julius Caesar's death many building projects had been begun but not yet finished. Augustus completed these and added new ones of his own, turning the Field of Mars into a sort of monumental theme park, and appropriating the Palatine Hill for a complex of imperial residences and temples, the origin of our term Palace.

Less ostentatiously, Augustus succeeded in making the Roman state civil war proof. The rather shambolic mess of governmental and fiscal expedients imposed by one conquering general after another were drawn into a more regular system of provincial government. Rome now had a dedicated military treasury with which to pay a new standing army. The Roman and Italian aristocracies were given roles in the new order as governors, and as military commanders. But the money, and the loyalty of the soldiers, was kept firmly in Augustus' hands. Augustus, not the people and certainly not the Senate, now decided which aristocrats would occupy which magistracies and

which priesthoods. Indeed all important decisions were now made in the imperial court. The Senate and people of Rome were given greater honours as they lost power. But busts and statues of Augustus were visible everywhere, portraying him as a general, as a priest, and as a god. He and his successors were worshipped in every city and province alongside the ancestral and domestic gods, and by the soldiers in the camps as well.

The real mark of Augustus' success was that he was able to pass on most of his powers to a series of successors. Rome avoided civil war for a hundred years after Actium. Augustus' immediate successors were not all talented: one (Caligula) was assassinated, and another (Nero) committed suicide because he thought he had lost control of the empire. But the system survived, with few modifications. When conflict between generals did break out, after the disaster of Nero's reign, it was only because none of Augustus' family survived to provide a new emperor. The war lasted less than two years (AD 69–70) and the victor, Vespasian, engineered a very Augustan restoration. The empire shuddered but was left undamaged. Without any formal establishment of a new constitution or title, the Roman emperor had become effectively the chief office of the Roman state. Weak and incompetent individuals could not now discredit the system, and there is no sign that anyone wished to do without the emperors. When Caligula was killed in AD 41 the Senate did briefly discuss a return to the Republic, but spent more time thinking about a possible successor. While they debated, the Praetorian Guard found Caligula's uncle Claudius hiding behind a curtain in the palace and made him emperor. From this point on the question was always simply Who should be emperor?

And emperor followed emperor. The Flavian dynasty ruled for most of the late first century AD. Wars of conquest added Britain and parts of southwest Germany to the empire, client kingdoms were swallowed up, frontiers fortified. A series of imperial forums extended out from the old Republican Capitol to the valley of the Colosseum. The city gradually acquired the trappings of an imperial capital. The assassination in AD 96 of the last Flavian, Domitian, shook the system much less than the death of Nero had. During the second century a series of long-reigning emperors presided over a relatively stable empire. Trajan (98–117) led wars of conquest north of the Danube and into what is now Iraq. His successor Hadrian (117–38) travelled widely around the empire. The emperors became more overtly monarchical and dynastic, especially outside Rome where they did not need to worry about senatorial sensibilities. An itinerant court emerged, one in which favourites and concubines competed for influence, scholars and poets were entertained, and the prefects of the

Praetorian Guard acted as grand viziers. Provincial communities sent streams of ambassadors to track down the emperor wherever he might be. They might have found Hadrian on the banks of the Nile, or supervising the construction of the great wall that crossed northern Britain, helping plan his great new temple of Venus opposite the Colosseum, making a speech to soldiers on parade in Africa, or at ease in his vast palace at Tivoli or in his beloved Athens. The empire was ruled from wherever the emperor happened to be.

The early Roman Empire was a world at peace. Warfare was minor in scale, and emperors rarely had difficulty in restricting it to the frontiers. The economy and population grew. The number of Romans increased as provincial aristocrats, former soldiers, and freed slaves were granted citizenship: by an edict of the early third-century Emperor Caracalla (198–217), almost everyone in the empire was enfranchised. Roman law suddenly embraced everyone. The lawyer Ulpian, writing in the aftermath of this most spectacular of imperial benefactions, insisted wills would be valid in any language, Celtic or Syriac as well as Greek and Latin. Roman ways of life were widely adopted, new technologies of architecture and manufacturing spread in the provinces. The rich in particular decorated their spectacular mansions with imported marbles and donated grand buildings to their native cities. Shared cultures of bathing, of education, of eating emerged in the cities of the empire. Even the poorest spectated at gladiatorial combats, beast hunts, athletic festivals, and other ceremonies, often focused on the imperial house. The early third century AD marked the apogee of ancient urbanism. To be sure there were parts of the empire where nine out of ten people still lived in the countryside. But in central Italy and western Anatolia, in North Africa, and Syria and Egypt, maybe thirty per cent of the population lived in cities or large villages. Most of the monuments of the Roman Empire that impress us so much today when we travel around its former provinces were built in this period. Trajan's conquest of Dacia was the last permanent expansion to the empire. Wars continued to be fought through the second century, but generally on the emperors' terms. Emperors and local elites alike seem to have been relatively prosperous, although it is unclear how far this rested on genuine growth and how far on the gathering of property into a smaller and smaller number of hands.

Conditions changed around the turn of the second and third centuries AD. Urban building declined from before 200 in the west and before 250 elsewhere. No new theatres or amphitheatres were built after this point, the number of inscriptions plummeted, and temple dedications seem fewer. At least some cities began to shrink in size, again especially in the west. Meanwhile the wars on the northern

frontier seem to have taken more of the emperors' time and resources. Perhaps this began as early as the reign of Marcus Aurelius, when wars against the Marcomanni of the middle Danube raged almost continuously between 166 and 180. Another round of civil war followed the murder in 192 of Marcus' son Commodus. The struggle between provincial generals was a close rerun of what had followed Nero's suicide, and the Severan dynasty that emerged ruled Rome 193–235 in a fairly traditional manner. But the revival of the Persian Empire under the Sassanian dynasty in the early third century put the army (and the treasury) under new pressure. For the next half-century, the empire was subjected to increased war on the Danube and the Rhine, suffered raids deep into the empire that resulted in the sack of cities like Athens and Tarragona which had hardly seen a soldier in 300 years, fought off major Persian offensives, and had to deal with secessions that for a while split the empire into three separate territories. Most emperors lasted only a few years, some only a few months, and few died in their beds. Increasingly they were drawn from military backgrounds, and their links with Rome and the Senate became even more attenuated. Military recovery began in the 260s but the empire was not a unified whole until the end of the century. The long reign of Diocletian, declared emperor in 284 and abdicating in 305, marked the empire's survival.

The Later Roman Empire

By the early fourth century, the Roman world was a very different place. Cities had in some regions shrunk back to tiny walled circuits built hurriedly out of dismantled monuments. Some of the most recently conquered territories had been abandoned. There was still a Senate in Rome, but its members no longer had much role in government or military command. The empire had a new religion, Christianity, and a new capital at Constantinople with its own Senate, its own Seven Hills, and its own imperial palace. The empire had a new currency too, with which to pay much higher taxes than ever before, needed to pay bigger armies and a growing bureaucracy. There was now a college of up to four emperors at any one time, the senior ones titled Augusti, the junior ones Caesars. Each had his own court and each was to concentrate on a different region of the empire, but especially on the northern and eastern frontiers. From now on the emperors had to keep a constant watch on the barbarians, and had to manage a difficult relationship with the rival empire of Persia.

The history of Persia in this period parallels that of Rome in many respects. Shapur II, Persian king of kings (309–79), created a highly centralized empire in which a bureaucracy replaced the quasi-feudal

baronies that had often barely acknowledged the authority of the Parthian kings. The Persian Empire too had a state religion, Zoroastrianism. Throughout late antiquity the frontier hardly shifted. Both empires had to deal with religious minorities and powerful priests. Wars were frequent and some cities regularly changed hands within a great border zone that stretched from Armenia in the north through Syria to the Arab world. But there were also periods of relative calm, and traders, missionaries, spies, and envoys moved back and forward between the two brother empires. That situation lasted until the seventh century when the Arab conquests destroyed the Sassanian Empire and very nearly the Roman one too.

Writing the history of the late empire has always proved difficult. At first the problem was the rival viewpoints of pagans and Christians, after Constantine I (306 to 337) replaced persecution with toleration and then began to patronize the Church on a grand scale. All his successors were Christians except for one, Julian, who tried to reverse Constantine's reform in his brief reign (361–3). By the end of the century, general toleration had been replaced by attacks on the temples of polytheists, and emperors devoted more and more of their energy to the fight against heresy. Enough influential polytheists survived to blame the new religion for the disasters of the fifth century. Our historical sources are bitterly divided. Then there is the problem of hindsight. How can we ignore the fact that the loss of Trajan's Dacian provinces was just the first of many losses of territory that saw Britain and northern Gaul slip out of Roman control in the mid-fifth century and the replacement of the last western emperor by a series of barbarian kings before 500?

Nevertheless the fourth century was in some senses an optimistic era, one that saw a partial recovery of intellectual life, much building (if now of churches and palaces rather than the traditional monuments of the classical city), and in the east some real prosperity. Even when a great group of Ostrogoths was allowed to cross the Danube in 376, Romans could reasonably remember other peoples settled inside the empire as allies. But the defeat of the eastern army by the Goths in 378 at the battle of Adrianople set in motion a set of migrations and diplomatic manoeuvres that led within a century to the total loss of the west. From the early fifth century new groups entered the empire, seeking their own share of territory, settlement as 'guests' of Rome, and perhaps sometimes safety from their own enemies, like the ferocious Huns. Rome itself was sacked twice, first by the Goths in 410 and then again by the Vandals in 455. The last emperor in the west was deposed in 476, although perhaps it did not seem a watershed at the time. By AD 500 the Vandals ruled a kingdom based on Carthage, the Visigoths and Sueves controlled Spain and Gaul,

Burgundians and Franks the rest of what is now France, and an Ostrogothic King ruled in the former imperial capital of Milan. The eastern emperors—bankrupt, without an army and preoccupied with Persia—had to acquiesce. So too did Roman elites stranded, as it were, behind enemy lines. For a few generations, Roman bishops and intellectuals served the new kings of the west, helping to create societies in which Romans and barbarians divided up roles and their wealth. Archaeological evidence shows quite clearly that trade across the Mediterranean was not severely disrupted, and in some areas urban life and even Latin literature thrived. The rulers of these kingdoms were Christians (if mostly Arian heretics in the eyes of eastern Roman bishops). Most attempted to preserve elements of Roman civilization, even rebuilding Roman monuments and intermarrying with Roman aristocratic families. Most relied on Roman bureaucrats to manage the complex fiscal systems they had inherited, preserving their warbands as an army to defend their acquisitions. Their kings lived in Roman palaces in the major cities of their realms, they issued coinage with Latin legends, devised law codes, and some even watched gladiatorial games.

Then, in the early sixth century, the eastern empire struck back. During Justinian's reign (527–65) his generals snatched Africa from the Vandals, and fought a long and damaging war up and down Italy culminating in the end of the Ostrogothic kingdom. Visigothic Spain was invaded. At Constantinople, great building projects were undertaken, a huge codification of Roman civil law was carried out, and administrative reforms put into place. (The complaints of one senior bureaucrat, John the Lydian, show how the 'new' bureaucracy created by Diocletian and Constantine was now regarded by its members as a set of ancient and venerable institutions!) For a generation, a Mediterranean Roman Empire seemed reborn. Then it folded up again. The Lombards invaded Italy, the Franks expanded their power, and, except for a foothold around Ravenna, Roman territory was confined to North Africa and Sicily. Meanwhile, the emperors were once again locked into war with Persia. The Persian Emperor Khusrau II swept back over the Syrian frontier once again and this time captured Jerusalem. Persian forces raided north into Anatolia and south-west into Egypt, where Alexandria fell in 619. The emperors could do little to help because the invasion coincided with an invasion from the north-west by the Avars. Constantinople, under siege from both sides, could well have fallen in 626. A new emperor, Heraclius, managed to pay off the Avars, defeat the Persians, and carry war to their own capitals in southern Mesopotamia. Humiliated by defeat, Khusrau was assassinated in 628. Heraclius triumphed in Jerusalem and Constantinople.

And then the world changed. Among the many peoples drawn into the long Romano-Persian conflicts were the tribes of the Arabian peninsula. In the process they had developed considerable military experience and knowledge of both sides, but it was the religious movement started by the Prophet Muhammad that galvanized them into concerted action. At the battle of the Yarmuk in 636, the Roman forces suffered a devastating defeat. By 642 Egypt, Syria, and Palestine were all under Arab rule and would never be recovered. The empire had shrunk to a third of its size, a Balkan state with territory in western Anatolia and some distant western provinces, most of which it would lose as the Arab armies moved westward across North Africa and up into Spain, and as they mastered the sea. Cut off from the grain of Egypt, the urban population of Constantinople plummeted. The Persians were not so lucky. They too suffered a devastating defeat in 636, at Qadisyya. Their capital, Ctesiphon, was occupied the next year. The last remnant of the army was destroyed in 642 at the battle of Nihavand, and their last emperor perished, on the run, in 651.

Fixing the end of the Roman Empire is not easy. Certainly those emperors who defended Constantinople when the Arabs besieged it in 717 considered themselves Romans. So too did their successors right up until Constantinople finally did succumb, not to Arabs but to Turks, in the fifteenth century. We do not have to agree with them, but any other date we pick is arbitrary. Much of Roman and of Persian civilization did survive the Arab conquest. The cities of Syria flourished under the caliphate, and the tax systems of Khusrau II had an afterlife in Iran, just as Roman ones did in the barbarian kingdoms of the west. Charlemagne the Frank dreamt of becoming Roman emperor, and in 800 his dream came true in a ceremony conducted in Rome by Pope Leo III. Does Byzantium have a special claim to be more of an heir to Rome than either western Christendom or medieval Islam? I am not sure that it does, and so for me, the story of the Roman Empire ends here.

Further Reading

Many excellent narrative accounts of Roman history exist. My short list of favourites is the following. Two very good and recent ones are Simon Price and Peter Thonemann's *The Birth of Classical Europe* (London, 2010) and Chris Wickham's *The Inheritance of Rome* (London, 2009), respectively the first and second volumes of the Penguin History of Europe. Two excellent guides to social and economic history for at least part of the period are Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society, Culture* (London, 1987)

and Peter Garnsey and Caroline Humfress, *The Evolution of the Late Antique World* (Cambridge, 2001). Michael Crawford's *The Roman Republic* (London, rev. edn. 1992) is a model of how Roman history can and should be written, argumentatively and based on every available kind of evidence from archaeology, coins, and inscriptions to contemporary documents and later literature.

II

EMPIRES OF THE MIND

Then Romulus, proudly clad in the tawny pelt of the she-wolf who nursed him, will ensure the future of the race, will found the martial walls and from his own name call them ROMANS. I have fixed no boundaries to their dominions, no fixed term to their rule, I have given them EMPIRE WITHOUT END. Even harsh Juno, who at present fills land and sea and sky with fear, will in the end think better of them, and at my side will show her favour to the Romans, masters of the world, the people of the toga. This has been decreed.

(Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.275–83)

Empire came to bewitch the Roman imagination. Ours too. Every study of ancient Rome, whether of its love poetry or festivals, its monumental art or the routines of the family, now invokes empire as one—sometimes as *the* — crucial context. But what they understood and we understand by ‘empire’ is not always the same thing. This chapter explores some of different senses of empire that are entwined at the heart of our stories of Rome.

An Imperial People

Sometimes it feels as if empire was written into Roman DNA. The Romans of the classical period definitely believed something like this. When epic poets or historians imagined the very earliest days of the city’s history, they pictured it as already fixed on a course for greatness. The coming of empire was the central theme of the *Aeneid*, a great epic poem composed by Virgil in the court of Augustus.¹ The epigraph of this chapter is taken from Jupiter’s prophecy of Rome’s future greatness that stands near the start of that epic. If at first it was designed to serve the immediate political needs of the poet and his patron, it had a much more influential afterlife. The *Aeneid* was the starting point of education in Italy and the western provinces for centuries to come. It occupied a place in Roman culture much like the Declaration of Independence and Constitution do in America, or Shakespeare does in Britain. Constantly quoted and instantly

recognizable, lines of the *Aeneid* are even ubiquitous as graffiti across the empire. Most come from the first book of the epic, suggesting most pupils did not get very far. But the children of provincial notables will have read Jupiter's famous lines as they struggled to learn Latin, and in the process learnt what it was to be Roman too.

The *Aeneid* does not tell the story of Augustus' rise to power, nor even of Rome's conquest of Italy and the Mediterranean. Instead, the story is set in the heroic age, the period immediately following that of Homer's two great Greek epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It tells how Prince Aeneas led a band of refugees away from the blazing ruin of Troy, after it had been sacked by the Greeks. The first six books follow their wanderings further and further west, driven first by fear, then drawn on by destiny into a strange and strangely modern new world. Monsters, hostile natives, and angry gods try to frustrate their journey. Then there are temptations along the way. No berth is more alluring than Carthage, which the Trojans find under construction, and ruled by Dido, the beautiful Phoenician queen and another refugee from the eastern Mediterranean. Of course Dido and Aeneas fall in love, and of course their love is doomed: this is, after all, epic not romance, although it takes Aeneas a while to realize it. For the gods have a plan, and the plan is Rome. Aeneas leads his men, his father and his son, and the sacred cult objects of Troy to the coast of Latium in central Italy. There war, prophecy, and marriage will eventually allow them to settle in the town of Alba Longa. From there, Aeneas' distant descendant—Romulus—will set out to found the city.

Aeneas was the son of a goddess, Venus, worshipped in Rome as Venus Genetrix, Venus our Ancestor. Julius Caesar built a temple to her at the heart of the new forum he paid for from the spoils of the Gallic War. After his assassination, his heir, the future Emperor Augustus, completed the project. The temple was finished not long before the composition of the *Aeneid*. Both of these monumental works mark stages in the process by which a single authorized version of Roman history was created out of a mass of contradictory traditions. One reason for this was the shift from a Republican form of government to a monarchy. Many traditions were linked to particular families, but now one family dominated the city. Julius Caesar, and so Augustus too, claimed to be direct descendants of Aeneas and Venus. Another reason was that Roman historians had only just begun to construct a reliable chronology of their own past. Scholars of the last generation of the free Republic, including Cicero's friends Varro, Nepos, and Atticus, had worked hard to correlate events in Roman tradition and the datelines established by Greek historians. Their conclusions—although often based on what to us seem like very shaky arguments—were never seriously challenged in antiquity. It was more

important that Rome had a genuine and agreed history, than that it was the right one. Augustus was equally concerned to fix the past. The historian Livy dryly records how Augustus himself engaged in research in ancient history to establish that no subordinate officer could be awarded the exceptional honour of the *spolia opima* awarded only to a general who killed his opponent in single combat.² Less controversially, great bronze tablets were set up recording the *fasti*, the exact sequence of consuls from the start of the Republic to the present day. The consuls were the pair of annual magistrates after which each year was traditionally named. Caesar and Augustus promoted research into the calendar, and published it.³



Fig 1. The Prima Porta Augustus displayed in the Braccio Nuovo new wing of Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican Museums, Rome, Italy

Fixed by Homer's epic at the end of the heroic age, Aeneas lived far too early to found the city of Rome himself. Greek scholars had calculated that Troy had fallen in 1183 BC while the date of the foundation of Rome was calculated as 753 BC. That left quite a gap. But Virgil's epic allowed Aeneas several visions of the future—Virgil's present that is—as an imperial age in which, under Augustus' rule, the

Romans would rule the world according to the decrees of Jupiter. Most impressive was a descent into the Underworld where Aeneas' dead father showed him the great Romans of history, waiting to be born, and gave him hints of their fates. Aeneas also took a trip up the Tiber to visit the future site of the city of Rome, still a pastoral idyll and settled by yet other refugees from the east, Greeks from Arcadia this time, who told him the story of how Hercules had passed by that very spot and defeated the terrifying monster Cacus there. Virgil wove together the many legends of ancient Rome, making out of them a narrative that could only culminate in Augustus.

The foundation of the city of Rome itself was left to one of Aeneas' descendants, Romulus, who with his brother Remus was the son of a princess of Aeneas' line and also of the god Mars, conveniently giving the Romans a second divine ancestor. When Augustus built his own forum and temple he dedicated the latter to Mars and set images of Venus, Mars, and Julius Caesar (now a god as well) on the pediment.⁴ Livy, who wrote not long after Virgil, opened his history *From the Foundation of the City* with the declaration that if any nation had the right to claim descent from Mars, the god of war, that nation was Rome.⁵ Romans found in the myths of early Rome more than simply a justification for their current greatness. The story of how Romulus killed his brother because he dared step over the wall he had just built for the new city was understood as a sign that civil war too was written into the Roman psyche. The Rome of Augustus was, after all, in recovery from nearly a century of civil wars. When Virgil describes the Africans rising against Dido after she chose a foreign prince, the Italians attacking the Trojans when Aeneas won the hand of the local princess, or when Livy tells how Romulus supplied his followers with women by kidnapping the wives and daughters of the neighbouring Sabines, we can see how Romans sought an explanation for their own apparently ingrained traditions of violence.⁶ That darker investigation runs alongside the repeated retellings of how much it had cost to found the Roman state and fulfil the city's divine destiny. The atrocities of the end of the Republic—with its riots, lynchings, and cold-blooded political murders—must have made it impossible to tell a convincing story of Rome only in terms of successive acts of heroism and piety.

Becoming Imperial

Myths of the deep past accumulated over time. Of course they were rewritten as Rome's empire grew. If we compare stories like these to the foundation myths of other cities in the ancient Mediterranean, it becomes immediately clear that many of Rome's traditions were not

very unusual. A startling number of cities claimed descent from Trojan or Greek refugees.⁷ This was presumably because Homer's epics had such great prestige, and because so little else was known about the early first millennium BC. Others claimed to be descended from wandering heroes, Hercules especially, but also Odysseus, Perseus, Antenor, and others. Most Greek colonies claimed divine sanction for their possession of the land, and the dispossession of the previous inhabitants. That sanction might take the form of signs, oracles, or miraculous events. Many paid cult to their founders, as the Romans in fact worshipped Romulus under the name Quirinus. Violent beginnings, battles with indigenous peoples, and marriages between incomers and native women, are also standard elements.⁸ Even the founding turned founder has many parallels. Presumably these were the central elements of the first versions of Rome's tales of origin. Only at a later stage can the prophecies have begun to include world dominion, and the legends started to explore the darker side of Roman nature.

Unfortunately, we know very little of how Romans thought about themselves before they became an imperial power. The first Latin literature was created at the end of the third century BC.⁹ By that time Rome was without question the major power in the western Mediterranean basin, and it had for generations dominated the Italian peninsula. The first Roman historians, Fabius Pictor writing in Greek and Cato the Elder in Latin, were already setting out to explain how Rome had overtaken Carthage. Fabius Pictor had taken part in the wars against the Gauls of north Italy in the late third century, and was one of a delegation of senior senators who visited the oracle at Delphi in Greece seeking advice after Hannibal's great victory at Cannae in 216 BC. Cato (234–149 BC) saw the defeat of Hannibal, and also took part in the first wars against the great kingdoms of the eastern Mediterranean. His book of *Origins* was the product of combing Greek scholarship for information about the prehistory of the peoples of Italy. Most of what he gathered must have been foundation legends similar to that of Rome. Earlier Greek historians of the classical period knew a little about Rome; but not much of what they had to say has survived. Rome seems to spring into history fully formed as an imperial power, spectacularly aggressive, with institutions well developed for surviving occasional defeats and converting military victories into lasting political dominion.¹⁰

The Romans of this period already had a sense of their history as a rise to greatness. A contemporary of Cato, Quintus Ennius (239–169 BC), wrote an epic poem that was in effect a history of Rome from the beginning until his own day. It was called the *Annales*, and was the basis of education in the late Republic in the same way the *Aeneid* was

under the empire. Cicero adored it, but only fragments now survive. All the same we have a good sense of Ennius' 'plot'. The first three books told the story of Rome from the fall of Troy through the foundation of the city and the rule of its seven kings until the Republic was created. Then followed twelve books relating Rome's wars against other Italian communities; against the Macedonian king Pyrrhus; against Carthage, culminating in the conquest of Greek cities in Italy and Sicily; and then the first wars in Spain; and those fought in the Balkans during the early second century BC against the great kingdoms of the east. Ennius then added three more books describing the victories of his patron, the general Marcus Fulvius Nobilior, whom he had accompanied on campaign in the northern Balkans in 189–188 BC. On their return Nobilior built a great temple on the Field of Mars, one dedicated to Hercules and the Muses. A prototype of Augustus' *Fasti* was also displayed in it. From the beginning, then, war and poetry went hand in hand. And Roman history was the history of Roman imperialism. Roman power was extended, just war by just war, until the entire sequence came to seem to have been sanctioned by the gods of Rome.¹¹ Their favour could never be taken for granted, but through repeated acts of piety the Roman people retained the divine mandate. Triumph after triumph proclaimed the support of the gods.¹² And while these epics and histories (and dramas too, although few have survived) were composed, the city itself became filled with victory temples, many vowed in battle and funded by the spoils donated by individual generals. The same generals decorated their own homes with trophies.

This then gives us a Roman sense of empire. The rule of one people, the people of the toga, over those whom they had defeated in war; a rule sanctioned by the gods of Rome as a mark of their favour for a people who were uniquely pious. Only in the last century of the Republic did Romans develop means of describing the great political entity they had created.¹³ Our term 'empire' derives from the Latin *imperium*. Its fundamental meaning was 'command', and right up until the end of the Republic, this remained its primary sense. As late as Julius Caesar's day the word *imperator* (the origin of our 'emperor') simply meant a general, someone invested with command. Soldiers on a battlefield might chant out the title after a battle as a way to honour their commander. *Imperium* was a temporary power and a personal one, granted him with solemn rituals for the duration of one campaign. Stepping back inside the city, which he had to do if he wanted to celebrate a triumph, meant relinquishing this power. Augustus was the first who never relinquished it. One sense that *imperium* acquired only very late in the process was the total territory controlled by Rome. Augustus' account of his own life, inscribed on

pillars before his tomb and disseminated as copies throughout the empire, proclaimed world hegemony and made clear that allied states and defeated enemies were all subject to Rome's command.

The Archetypal Empire

The modern idea of empire has its own history. Yet Rome has a key place in the history of this idea. The Romans created a set of ideas and symbols that exercised a fascination over many subsequent generations. Other empires had touched the Mediterranean world before Rome, most recently those of the Persians and of Alexander. But their repertoire of ceremonials, titles, and images has had less of an afterlife, in part because Romans refused to acknowledge them as their equals, and invented their own language of world domination, in part because the Latin vocabulary of empire was the one adopted by later powers. The history of the idea of empire in the west is very largely the history of successive imitations of Rome. Each time Rome was copied, directly or indirectly, the idea of empire was modified. Yet Latin titles and imperial eagles lasted well into the twentieth century. 'Empire' plunges through European and finally world history, like a snowball rolling downhill.¹⁴

The Roman Empire had many imitators and would-be successors. The rulers of the medieval west lived among the ruins of Roman monuments. Roman coins were still to be found in the fields. Roman walls embraced the tiny towns of Europe, and the best roads remained for centuries those the Romans had built, roads that still crossed rivers on stone bridges that early medieval monarchs could not rival. Latin remained the main language of literature, and classical texts were widely read and treated with exaggerated awe. And knowing Rome was inseparable from knowing about its empire. When Frankish kings began to extend their power over other peoples, Rome was the only possible model. At the end of the twelfth century, the French king was nicknamed Philip Augustus, and his main rivals were the German emperor and the Angevin kings of England, who included lesser kings among their vassals. Emperor meant, for much of the Middle Ages, the supreme secular position of leadership. Ordinary kings ranked below him, popes on a par.

Besides, there were still live Roman emperors to admire and rival. They ruled in Constantinople on the Bosphorus, the city we know as Istanbul and which had been Byzantium before. These emperors justifiably regarded themselves as Romans, the heirs of Justinian and Constantine at least as well as of their pagan predecessors. The language of their empire might now be Greek, and its domains had

shrunk to the lands around the Aegean Sea, but the palace, the hippodrome, and the libraries of Byzantium, as well as the ceremonial and titulature of the court, proclaimed its authentic Roman imperial style. North and west of Byzantium a great penumbra of peoples were drawn into its cultural sphere. Viking adventurers travelled across the European rivers to Novgorod and then on to the city they called Miklagard, the Great City. One of them carved some runes, still visible today, into the balcony of the great imperial church of Haghia Sophia, built by the sixth-century emperor Justinian. Its dome provided the model for Islamic mosques, themselves often built on the site of Roman temples or churches and often employing Roman columns in their construction. After the Fourth Crusade (1202–4) there were Frankish emperors in Byzantium for a while, briefly drawing the western and eastern traditions together. Even when the restored Greek emperors finally lost the city to the Turks in the fifteenth century there was no total rupture. Various princes took the opportunity to declare their own states a ‘Third Rome’: Moscow is the most famous. For a while there had in any case been a sultanate of Rûm ruling former Byzantine possessions in Asia Minor, and the Ottomans staged grand ceremonies in the hippodrome and worshipped in Haghia Sophia, now a mosque, just like their Christian predecessors. Roman political models had been less influential elsewhere in the Islamic world. Other aspects of Roman civilization periodically fascinated. The cities of Byzantine Syria had a brief period of prosperity after the Arab conquest. During the ninth century the Abbasid caliphs employed some of their Christian subjects to trawl Greek literature and translate whatever was valuable. Many medical texts and some works of philosophy have survived only in Arabic translation.¹⁵

Empire had lasting resonance, then, as a set of symbols. From our distant vantage point we can watch the baton being passed down, generation to generation. The predominant dynamic seems to have been competition. Charlemagne employed the language of empire to consolidate Frankish hegemony: he and the papacy also found it a helpful tool in keeping the Byzantine emperor at bay. Four centuries later the author of the *Chanson de Roland* imagined Charlemagne as a great proto-crusader, who at God’s command would defend Christendom against the *païen* (the pagan). A few of the medieval German emperors took up this challenge. But mostly they employed the title of emperor to express their sense of being at the pinnacle of a worldly hierarchy, overlords of prince-electors, petty kings, and free cities from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. During the three centuries in which the Hapsburg family provided Holy Roman Emperors, the imperial style was further elaborated in Spain, Austria, and Germany. The enduring power vested in these symbols is demonstrated by the

decision of Napoleon to abolish the Holy Roman Empire, and to proclaim the first French empire in 1804. Austria responded by declaring the Austrian Empire the same year. Nineteenth-century France experienced an alternation of republics and empires. The second French Empire perished after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870: the German Empire was born the next year. The British Queen Victoria took the title Empress of India in 1876. The nineteenth century saw brief New World empires established in Brazil, Haiti, and in Mexico. The Austro-Hungarian Empire lasted until 1918. The Russian tsars lost their empire just a year earlier: their title tsar (derived naturally from Caesar) can be tracked back in Slav languages as far as the rulers of tenth-century Bulgaria, some of Byzantium's most formidable opponents. British monarchs retained the imperial title until 1948. The latest emperor in this tradition was Bokassa, who ruled the Central African Empire between 1976 and 1979.

It is an obvious point to make, perhaps, but these polities had almost nothing in common. Nor do they correspond very well, in any age, to the list of imperial powers we might draw up on other criteria. The British, by most estimates, ruled an empire (or perhaps two) long before Victoria was persuaded to take the title. Spain was clearly an early modern empire, whether or not the ruling Hapsburg happened to be emperor. On the other hand, these claims cannot be dismissed entirely as megalomaniac fantasies. What we are observing is the enduring power of Roman models of empire to fascinate, especially at moments of intense competition for precedence. When monarchies vied for prestige, they reached for the eagles, the Latin titles, wreaths, and classicizing architecture. Their value was that they were instantly recognizable. Even Bokassa, as he seized power within the Central African Republic, demonstrated how well he had learned the symbolic language of European colonialism.

The revival of the language of empire in the modern age seems particularly surprising. Rivalry between European monarchies was clearly one factor. Perhaps there were simply not many alternative vocabularies to express the global differentials of power being created. But there were multiple local factors too. Napoleon's empire was not just about dominion abroad, it was also about the working out of the Republican project within post-Revolutionary France. Victoria's assumption of the title Empress of India was not just about rivalry with her German son-in-law, Kaiser Wilhelm: it may also have reflected a growing recognition of the national identity of India. The last Mughal (deposed by the British in 1858) had taken the Urdu title *Badishah-e-Hind*, which is often translated as Emperor of India. The Russian monarchs' use of the Slavic term czar or tsar also evoked the guardianship of Orthodox Christianity.

Behind all this we can sense the emergence of a group of nation-states that regarded each other as in a league of their own, as great powers. Today, in the first decades of the twenty-first century, only three members of the G8 and only one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council are still monarchies of any kind. But for much of the nineteenth century, all the leading nations had hereditary heads of state. The nineteenth century too was the high watermark of European interest in the classics, and especially in Rome. Perhaps it is not surprising that, by one route or another, so many of these monarchs became emperors, at least for a short while. The language and trappings of empire offered a way to express a sense that they were more than simply kings and queens, and that the nation-states over which they reigned were not ordinary nations.

Empire did not lose its charm until the middle of the twentieth century. One by one monarchies were abolished, or rendered peripheral. Communist states found Rome a less attractive model than had their predecessors. Fascism was the last major political movement to make use of Roman models. Mussolini's imitation of Rome was the most explicit: as well as using Roman precedent to make a claim to Mediterranean hegemony, his party was named after the *fascis*, the bundle of rods surrounding an axe that was the symbol carried before a Roman magistrate. German Fascism too made much use of classical Roman imagery, especially in the architecture of the Third Reich.¹⁶ After the Second World War the Japanese emperor was made to renounce his divinity, European empires were dismantled, and imperialism came to acquire a more and more pejorative sense. The British monarchy quietly put away the title after the end of the British Raj. Classical imagery was in any case less and less effective as the new professional and governing classes had less and less knowledge about Rome. 'Imperialist' became a term of abuse directed against colonial powers by newly independent peoples, and the label was used as a term of condemnation by all sides in the Cold War. Discussions of whether or not the USA is today an empire are rarely sympathetic towards American foreign policy.

The multiple afterlives of the Roman Empire are one reason for the enduring importance of Rome. But they can also obscure our vision of Rome itself. It is worthwhile considering some of the less obvious contrasts between Rome and her nineteenth-century imitators. For one thing, the Roman Empire admitted no equals and recognized no predecessor. There was no notion of a community of nations, no elite club of superpowers; the Romans were a single people over and against the rest. Not all of their subjects and neighbours saw things this way. But empire for Rome was novel and unique. Rome was restoring nothing, and the world empire it created seemed, for a

while, without precedent.



Fig 2. A Mercury Dime, depicting the Roman *fascēs*

Empire as a Category

The last notion of empire that I want to introduce is one the Romans would have found hard to credit. This is the idea that empire is a particular kind of political entity, one that has occurred on several occasions and in several locations in world history. This usage makes the term ‘empire’ into a timeless socio-historical category; the very opposite of a phenomenon with its own history.

We are all familiar, naturally, with the idea that ‘empire’ denotes a particular kind of thing. Alongside the Roman Empire we might want to set the British Empire, the New World empires of the Aztecs and Inkas, the Persians and the Assyrians in antiquity, the Spaniards in the early modern period, and so on. For everyday purposes, we associate empire with the conquest of other peoples or states, with grand capital cities and rich court ceremonial, with rule over a great swathe of territory, and with a leading place in historical narratives. Empires rise and fall, they dominate their neighbours, they gather exotic treasures from the edges of the earth, and claim to be at the centre of it. Empire evokes dreams of universal dominion: a Reich that lasts a thousand years, a flag the sun never sets on, a ruler who is a king of kings.

It turns out to be not so easy to develop more rigorous definitions. We can hardly rely on the rulers’ preferred description, which usually depended on local rivalries and whether the term would win or lose them support. Besides, what are we to do when we consider places outside those traditions that placed Rome at its root? Most historians

would agree that the Inka and the Chinese created empires comparable to those of Europe and the Middle East, yet how are we to decide which Quechua or Mandarin terms have the same semantic range as 'empire' or 'emperors'? The ancients themselves did not always agree on what was or was not an empire. Roman emperors generally treated Persia as a lesser state, yet Persians on occasion addressed them as 'brother emperors'.¹⁷ The historical sociologist finds it especially difficult to distinguish small empires from large states, since most states are built on domination, and since only the tiniest states have no internal peripheries. Did the English ever exercise *imperial* rule over Wales and Ireland or over Scotland? That English governments dominated these regions is without doubt, but the language chosen to describe them was never imperial. Scots were eventually presented as partners in the British Empire. But was not this mere ideology, a device to disguise English hegemony and to claim that the inhabitants of Scotland were in some sense privileged relative to those of other subjected territories? Empires are certainly states, and there are certainly rulers and ruled. But there are also those subjects who join in conquering and ruling, both their own people and others. Scale ought to be a good criterion. But fixing the limit is impossible. The Bronze Age empires of Mesopotamia and the classical Athenian empire were tiny compared to those of Rome, Persia, and north India. Yet it would seem odd either to deny the title 'empire' to them, or alternatively to term virtually all the kingdoms of medieval and modern Europe imperial.

What most historians concerned with comparative analysis do is to divide up the term 'empire' into sub-categories, and to try to compare only like with like.¹⁸ It makes sense, for example, to treat separately the late nineteenth-and early twentieth-century European empires in which nation-states enjoyed brief control of distant regions with much weaker economies, largely through their technological superiority. Even within pre-industrial (or, if you prefer, pre-modern or pre-capitalist) empires, some comparisons seem hazardous. Can we really compare the maritime empire of early modern Portugal with the chronologically contemporaneous empires of the valley of Mexico, whose rulers did not use writing, iron, or pack animals and whose political horizons were so much narrower? Perhaps these definitional questions do not matter too much: small empires are difficult to distinguish from large states precisely because they are, in many respects, very similar. Unless it is important to establish an unambiguous separation of categories (for example if one were trying to show how some things were always true of empires and never true of anything else) the vagueness of the term is not a problem. Lenin needed clear definitions for his proposition that imperialism was a

particular historical stage, but that is not my purpose here.¹⁹

The empires to which I will most often compare Rome are those that resembled it most closely in scale and technology. That means great states like Achaemenid and Sassanian Persia, the Mauryan Empire of north India, and China after the Qin dynasty. All these were states with productive agricultural economies, generally dependent on Iron Age technology, and had no source of energy beyond human and animal power, firewood, and perhaps watermills. All employed some form of writing or similar record keeping, and also standardized systems of money, weights, and measures. All were so vast it took weeks to get a message from one side to the other by the fastest communications media of the day, and months for an army to cross. All had elaborate social hierarchies, especially at their courts, and made extensive use of ceremonial and ritual. States of this kind are sometimes called tributary or aristocratic empires. Empires of this kind were typically created when one or more ruling peoples conquered—generally rather rapidly—a number of previously independent subject peoples. Achaemenid Persia was formed from the forced merger of the kingdoms of the Medes, Babylonia, Lydia, and Egypt, all between 550 and 520 bc. Rome became imperial by first swallowing up other Italian states, then defeating Carthage and finally the major kingdoms of the eastern Mediterranean. The Qin became imperial by conquering six or seven other kingdoms at the end of the Warring States Period. There are many other examples of this pattern known from around the world. But conquest was only the first stage, and many empires collapsed at the moment expansion stopped: the fate of Alexander the Great's empire is a case in point. Conquest states needed to transform themselves into stable structures of domination. Their rulers came to depend not only on the use and threat of violence, but also on the tacit support of local elites of various kinds. Through their help levies, tithes, taxes, or some combination of these was extracted. Local rulers took a portion and most of this surplus was put to the task of maintaining order and defending the empire. The residue paid for the extravagant lifestyle of the rulers of the empire. Those rulers also invested heavily in ceremonial and monuments. Most claimed the mandate of heaven, both to reassure themselves and to cow their subjects. Rome was, in all these respects, a fairly typical pre-industrial empire.

What is to be gained from thinking about Rome in these terms? One benefit is that comparison sometimes explains some feature of society that seems odd to us today. That Roman emperors were worshipped as gods seems less strange when we appreciate quite how widespread practices of this kind were in ancient empires.²⁰ Comparison can also sometimes help us appreciate how unusual one

or another feature of the Roman version of early empire was. Citizenship, for example, an inheritance from the city-state cultures of the archaic and classical Mediterranean, is a good example of one respect in which the Roman Empire was unusual. Persian shahs and the Chinese sons of heaven had subjects, not fellow citizens. Perhaps a final advantage is that this kind of exercise reminds us of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate comparisons. Many historians today find themselves making comparisons between modern imperialisms and those of the Roman past. The reasons are obvious enough. Our age has rejected the language of empire, arguably without always surrendering much of its power. Rome enters the discussion not because it is a very close analogy, but because it is familiar, and because modern empires have made so much use of Roman symbols. Modern empires are unlike Rome: the principal difference is not one of morality (racism versus slavery anyone?) but of technology. Lenin was right to insist on the ineradicably modern origins of nineteenth- and twentieth-century imperialism. Comparative history gives us a sense of perspective: Rome was not unique, but nor was it very like either the British Raj or twenty-first-century superpowers. Rome has its own Romance.

Further Reading

Roman myth-makings about their past and their gradual awakening to an imperial destiny are the subject of Erich Gruen's *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome* (London, 1992) and Emma Dench's *Romulus' Asylum* (Oxford, 2005). Andrew Erskine's *Troy between Greece and Rome* (Oxford, 2001) is a wonderful study of Rome's discovery of its Trojan origins. A vivid account of Roman myth-making is Peter Wiseman's *Myths of Rome* (Exeter, 2004).

The study of later receptions of Greece and Rome is one of the fastest growing areas of classical scholarship. For the afterlife of Rome and for Rome as a model of empire, see Catharine Edwards's *Roman Presences* (Cambridge, 1999) and Margaret Malamud's *Ancient Rome and Modern America* (Oxford, 2009). A valuable set of essays is Richard Hingley's *Images of Rome: Perceptions of Ancient Rome in Europe and the United States in the Modern Age* (Portsmouth, RI, 2001).

The best introduction to the comparative history of the pre-modern world is Patricia Crone's *Preindustrial Societies* (Oxford, 1989). One of the most influential studies of early empires was Jon Kautsky's *The Politics of Aristocratic Empires* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1982). Susan Alcock, Terence D'Altroy, Kathy Morrison, and Carla Sinopoli's *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History* (Cambridge, 2001) faithfully

reproduces the exciting conference that gave rise to it. For a recent essay in systematic comparative history, see Walter Scheidel, *Rome and China* (Oxford, 2009).



Map 1. The peoples of Italy around 300 BC

KEY DATES IN CHAPTER III

753-510 BC Period of Roman history, as calculated by Varro (But an average reign of over 30 years for each of seven kings of Rome is implausible)

509 BC First treaty with Carthage (others followed in 348 and 306) supposedly following rapidly on the foundation of the Republic

496 BC Traditional date of the battle of Lake Regillus in which Rome defeated

the Latin League

~~494~~⁷⁵³ Traditional date for the first secession of the *plebs*, the beginning of a long struggle for political emancipation conventionally termed the Conflict of the Orders

~~390~~³⁹⁰ Traditional date of the destruction of Veii by Rome

~~390~~³⁹⁰ Traditional date of the Gallic sack of Rome

~~481-290~~³⁴³⁻²⁹⁰ Recently at war with Samnites of central Italy (later remembered as three Samnite wars)

~~340-338~~³⁴⁰⁻³³⁸ The Latin League ends in the disbanding of the Latin League.

~~336-323~~³³⁶⁻³²³ Alexander III (the Great) of Macedon, conqueror of Greece and the Persian Empire

~~287~~²⁸⁷ *Lex Hortensia* makes decisions of the plebeians binding on the community as a whole. The conventional end of the Conflict of the Orders.

~~280-275~~²⁸⁰⁻²⁷⁵ Piracy campaigns in Italy against Rome and Sicily against Carthage and then returns across the Adriatic

NB Most dates before Pyrrhus' invasion derive from conjectures made by antiquarians in the last century BC. The first serious histories of the west were those written by Timaeus of Sicilian Tauromenium and by Fabius Pictor (of Rome) in the early and later third century BC respectively. Both works are lost, but later writers made some use of them in works written in the second century BC and after.

III RULERS OF ITALY

What you see before you, stranger, now mighty Rome,
were grassy hills before the days of Trojan Aeneas.
Evander's wandering cattle rested where now the Palatine
temple to Naval Apollo stands high. These golden temples
grew for terracotta gods, content to live in simple houses
built without art.

(Propertius, *Elegies* 4.1.1–6)

Almost no Greek writer mentions Rome before 300 BC, and no native historian before 200 BC. By the time these histories were written, Rome was already the dominant power within Italy. During the third century BC, the Romans fended off Pyrrhus of Epirus' invasion of southern Italy; fought and won a twenty-three-year-long naval war against Carthage; consolidated their power over the Greek cities of Campania and southern Italy and the peoples of the peninsula's mountainous spine; and began the conquest of the Gallic inhabitants of the regions north of the Apennines and south of the Alps. The final two decades of the century saw Rome survive Hannibal's invasion of Italy and carry war back to Carthage. Victory at Zama in 202 ended Carthaginian regional ambitions forever, even if the city survived another half-century before it was obliterated. Rome at the start of the second century BC enjoyed a dominant position at the geopolitical centre of the Inland Sea. It was equipped with institutions, ideologies, and experience geared to conquest. From that point on, control of the whole Mediterranean world was only a matter of time.

How the Romans reached that position is more puzzling. Ancient narratives are transparently written in the knowledge of (and often to explain) Rome's imperial destiny. Myths of divine favour and mortal virtue, and tales of the heroic exploits of the ancestors of this or that aristocratic clan, can hardly be the basis for our history. Even those Roman historians who were reasonably sceptical of those stories tended to use the better-known histories of Greek cities as a pattern for their own reconstructions. Their accounts present a Rome at times impossibly primitive, like the pastoral idyll Propertius summons up beneath the golden temples of Augustan Rome, or else fantastic tales of palace intrigues worthy of Homeric courts. For all these reasons, a

reliable account of early Rome must begin from archaeology.

The City on the Tiber

Perhaps no archaeological site has been the object of such intense scrutiny as the city of Rome.¹ The site has been continually occupied since the Bronze Age. Layered remains of medieval, Renaissance, and later cities make it difficult to reconstruct even the imperial capital of Augustus in detail. That megalopolis, with its great monuments and a population of around a million, was itself the product of centuries of rebuilding. Construction reached a particularly frantic phase during the late Republic. It was already widely reported in Pliny the Elder's day, (the early Flavian period) that in 78 BC

no house in Rome was more beautiful than that of Marcus Lepidus [the consul], but by Hercules within thirty-five years the same house did not rank in the top one hundred mansions.²

By the end of the Republic many aristocratic houses and temples were being reconstructed every generation on ever more lavish scales, funded by the proceeds of overseas conquest. Recovering material from the origins of Rome beneath all of this is very difficult, and its interpretation remains highly controversial.³

At the beginning of the last millennium BC communities of Iron Age farmers had already established villages on the tops of the low tufa plateaux that approached the River Tiber where it made a slow curve around the little plain that would become the Field of Mars. Each village had one or more cemeteries. The best known is at Osteria dell'Osa, in use from the ninth to the seventh centuries.⁴ The organization of the burials and the distribution of the grave goods suggest it was shared by a number of clans, and also that it was used both by families of high status and by their humbler dependants. It is likely that the separate identities of these villages, and of their ruling families, also explain the later location of a number of key temples on each of the hills of Rome. How, and how early, these communities began to work together as a single polity is obscure: there are far too many gaps in the record.

The story of urbanism in central Italy is interwoven with that of Phoenician and Greek penetration of the western Mediterranean. Phoenicians and Greeks first appeared in the ninth and eighth centuries respectively, powered by economic growth at home and exploiting slight but significant technological advantages in navigation and warfare.⁵ Indigenous Iron Age societies were everywhere drawn into relationships of one kind or the other with the new arrivals.

Exploration and trade typically came first; colonial foundations followed in some areas. Eventually, Phoenicians would settle in North Africa, western Sicily, and southern Spain; Greeks in eastern Sicily and southern Italy and eventually Mediterranean France. Bases like Marseilles near the mouth of the Rhône, and Spina at the northern end of the Adriatic, opened up trade routes into central Europe. Phoenicians and Greeks went on to explore the Atlantic coast too, seeking tin from the British Isles and exotic goods such as ivory from West Africa. But at first things were probably much more confused. There is early evidence for both Phoenician and Greek presence in coastal Etruria. It was metals that first drew visitors to central Italy.⁶ During the eighth century the Etruscans to the north of Rome and Campanians to the south began to be enriched by trade with the newcomers. Etruscans had already begun to develop complex urban societies and states before easterners arrived; they were well positioned to repel would-be colonists, and enthusiastically traded metal grain for eastern luxuries.⁷ Their enthusiasm was so marked that this period of Etruscan culture is often called the Orientalizing period, and for a while many scholars believed that in their case the myths of eastern origins were actually true. Further south, Campanians and others were less able to resist Greek settlement: a string of new Greek cities were founded in southern Italy, the most northerly being Cumae.

Rome was located between the two, in the region known to ancients as Old Latium. During the ninth and eighth centuries the material culture of this region diverged from that of neighbouring regions and developed a style of its own, but one noted for its relative poverty. There are fewer rich burials than in Etruria, its warrior graves contained many fewer eastern imports, its population probably did increase, but it was scattered in smallish settlements that could not compare either with southern Etruscan centres like Veii, Tarquinii, and Caere, or with the Greek cities at Cumae and Naples. At the northern edge of Latium was the cluster of villages at the Tiber crossing.

When did this cluster of villages first come to form the community of the Romans? Recent excavations have uncovered a number of huts and burials and some kind of defensive wall dating to the eighth century, but it is very difficult to be certain what these tantalizing fragments represent. Was Rome already on the road to urbanism? Or still just a scatter of villages? During the late seventh century the swampy valley north of the Palatine was drained, creating what would become the forum. At some point in the sixth century massive walls were constructed in some places. Both projects must have taken some labour and some organization. The earliest of Rome's great temples,

on and around the Capitol, are also sixth century in date. All these enterprises would have taken a great deal of manpower, and testify to some kind of collective organization. From the sixth century, too, survive the first traces of massive aristocratic houses, located on the southern edge of the forum. From this point on it seems reasonable to think of Rome as a city with defined districts and some centralized institutions. But the division of space was fairly rudimentary. The early forum perhaps served a whole range of commercial, political, and religious functions, and the Capitoline Hill would for centuries be both a religious sanctuary and a refuge/citadel. But for some purposes at least the inhabitants of Rome seem have come together as a single people.

This emergence of cities through the coming together of clusters of villages was a common process across the archaic Mediterranean world. Athens followed a similar sequence, growing out of hamlets each with their own cemetery in the area around the acropolis. The first public space of Athens, the *agora*, also served all sorts of functions as late as the sixth century; a more differentiated use of space followed only later. The history of early Corinth is not very different. Southern Etruria also followed this route to urbanism. Veii, just ten miles north of Rome, grew up on a plateau of the soft volcanic rock known as tufa. A cluster of villages, cemeteries, and hilltop sanctuaries gradually coalesced to form what by ancient standards was a massive city. Piecemeal fortifications closed the gaps in natural defences until, in the early fourth century, a six-kilometre-long circuit wall was built. Rome's 'Servian' wall circuit, built almost contemporaneously, was eleven kilometres (about seven miles) long and enclosed over 400 hectares. By the standards of the age this was a huge occupied area, telling us that Rome already stood out among her Italian neighbours, and especially among the Latins who mostly lived in much smaller settlements.

Rome resembled Etruscan cities like Veii more than it did Athens or Corinth. Similarities of culture and technology—and also of geology and climate—had created a regional style of urbanism in central Italy. Perhaps too it made a difference that in the late Bronze Age there had been palaces and states in southern Greece with strong links to Egypt and the Near East, whereas the Italian Bronze Age had been organized on a much smaller and more local scale, more like that of northern Europe in fact. But central Italy had its own advantages. Then as now, it was a fertile region thanks to the combination of Atlantic rainfall and volcanic soils. The plateau sites favoured by Bronze and Iron Age farmers were also the product of volcanism, spurs of soft tufa formed from lava flows. Hilltop sites were not only preferred for defence: they were also healthier, given the prevalence of malaria in the marshes of

the coastal plain. Architecturally too there was a regional style. While archaic Greek cities were building temples and carving sculpture out of the spectacular marbles found around the Aegean Sea, their western counterparts were constructing temples out of tufa and brick, roofing and decorating them with brightly painted terracotta tiles moulded with faces, images, and abstract designs. Even the statues of the gods were ceramic rather than stone. These were the ancient terracotta gods in their simple homes that Propertius contrasted with the marble splendours of his own day.

The most difficult thing to explain is what factors made Rome emerge out of the general poverty of Latial culture to rival the great cities of Etruria. Location probably played an important part. The Tiber is not one of the great rivers of the Mediterranean, but in ancient times it offered both a boundary between peoples, and a communication route from Rome down to the coast and into the interior. To the north of the river there were the Etruscans, to the south the Latins. The Tiber gave access to the Sabine hills to the east as well as to Umbria in the north. By the imperial period, the Tiber Valley provided timber and building stone for Rome, its tributaries supplied much of the aqueduct system, and its claybeds were exploited for brick production.⁸ Rome was located at the intersection of ecological zones, always an advantageous position. Rome is about fifteen miles from the sea. An outpost was established at the Tiber mouth at Ostia as early as the fourth century. Long before this there were coastal saltpans there, and the Salt Road (the *via Salaria*) ran through Rome and over the Apennines to the Adriatic. Rome did not sit in an area with great metal resources like the Colline Metallifere that had attracted Greeks to Elba. Nor was the countryside as productive of grain or as suitable for vines as that of Campania. But perhaps when the tendrils of exchange networks extended deeper into Italy, the river port of the city on the Tiber seemed a good entry point.

A second advantage was perhaps Rome's location on the margins of the Etruscan world. Sixth-century Rome was in some senses a hybrid, and hybrids have their own vigour. Physically the city resembled the great cities of southern Etruria—Tarquinia, Cerveteri, Orvieto, and Vulci as well as Veii. Etruscan influence is everywhere in the form of the hard black Etruscan pottery called *bucchero*. But Romans shared a language and some sanctuaries with the Latins, whom they considered as their kin. Archaeologically the balance seems to have shifted over time. The ninth-century huts and burials of Rome are very similar to those known elsewhere in Latium. Rome did not participate in the growth experienced by Etruria and some other parts of Italy in the eighth century when the Greeks arrived in search of metals. Yet at some point in the seventh and early sixth centuries

Rome began to stand out, and to stand comparison with its Etruscan neighbours to the north.

Etruscan cities had emerged as a cluster of what archaeologists sometimes call ‘peer-polities’, a group of states which for a while seem to develop on parallel lines at an accelerated rate as they compete with each other, and learn from each other’s successful experiments and mistakes.⁹ The same idea has been used in the Greek world to explain the rapid diffusion of innovations as varied as law codes, temple building, and tyranny. Etruscan cities had a common history of this kind from their first nucleations in the ninth century to the shared taste for oriental art in the eighth. Peer-polity systems have other effects, however, including a certain amount of institutional inbreeding and a tendency to limit the success of their strongest members. The Greek world in the fourth century offers a good example, with successive leading city-states brought down to size by alliances made among the others. The unification of Greece came, in the end, only in the form of conquest by a state that had developed on the geographical margins of the system, Alexander’s kingdom of Macedon. Growth at the margins is another common phenomenon. The ancient competition between Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, and various Syrian and Anatolian states was ended in the Iron Age not when one drew ahead of the rest, but when all were conquered from outside by the Persians. Equally the first Chinese Empire was created by one of the marginal polities of the Warring States Period, the Qin. Rome would again enjoy the benefits of growth at the margin during the early second century BC, when it took over the Macedonian-led kingdoms to its east, kingdoms that had been engaged for a couple of centuries in expensive and inconclusive competition for influence over the Aegean, southern Turkey, and southern Syria. Perhaps at the start of its history, too, Rome’s rise was due in part to the fact that it was *not* central to developments in Etruria.

History and Myth

Tradition had a different take on the Latin–Etruscan hybridity of early Rome. The last kings of Rome were remembered as Etruscans, the Tarquins from—inevitably if suspiciously—the city of Tarquinii. It was they, so legend ran, who had drained the forum with forced labour. The traditional chronology is close enough to the archaeological traces of urban growth in the late sixth century to persuade some that the story preserves elements of fact.¹⁰ The Tarquins, the story goes, had also begun building the great temple of Jupiter on the Capitol, commissioning the master potter Vulca to come from Veii to create a spectacular terracotta cult statue. But they did not survive to see the

work finished: the foundation of the temple of Capitoline Jupiter coincided with the birth of the Republic. The founding myth told how native Roman aristocrats had expelled the Etruscan tyrants, and set up a constitution in which popular assemblies were sovereign. Those assemblies would elect magistrates—first praetors and then consuls—who would govern in pairs, and for no more than one year at a time, advised by a council of former magistrates, the Senate. The most important decisions—declarations of war and the passing of new laws—remained the prerogative of the entire community. A conventional narrative of liberation from tyranny was thus given an ethnic dimension, and linked to the creation of a unique political system. Rome became more Roman by shedding its Etruscan rulers.

The foundation of the temple of Jupiter was a critical reference point for later reflections on the Roman past, just as the temple itself provided a central focus in the ritual year, and for the collective life of the city. At least one late fourth-century scribe dated events from the foundation of the temple. Augustus' *Fasti* began in the same year with the first ever pair of consuls. So the expulsion of the Tarquins marked (for some) the beginning of Roman history.¹¹ But it is not easy now to construct a narrative of events from that point until the end of the third century BC. Nor was it easy then. Pictor, Cato, Polybius, and their contemporaries looked back from the turn of the third and second centuries, but their vision was limited. There were hardly any written documents. To be sure there was a mass of traditions: some glorified particular families and individuals, some perhaps presented more or less popular views, some were perhaps in the form of dramas or songs, some linked to particular places, cults, or temples. Sifting contradictory and competing versions and arranging them in time was a formidable task, for which the only tools were guesswork, analogy from Greek history, and imaginative reconstruction. When historians of the late Republic and early Principate set about completing the task, they faced even more formidable difficulties. Polybius had set out to write an account of Rome's conquest of the Mediterranean between 220 and 168: that story began around twenty years before his birth and he had witnessed the latter phases, from the vantage point of an honoured hostage, travelling in the train of Scipio Aemilianus. Polybius preceded his account with a shorter summary of events from 264 BC, the start of the first Punic war and the end of Timaeus' *Histories* of the west. When, under Augustus, Dionysius set out to write *Roman Antiquities* that ended more or less where Polybius began, and when Livy around the same time began his total history of Rome *From the Foundation of the City*, they had to engage in a completely different enterprise, the rationalization of a set of memories organized around powerful social myths.

One set of stories chronicles the rise of Rome as military superpower. The Etruscans made repeated attempts to recapture Rome, but all of them were foiled. For over a century, Rome and Veii glared at each other across the Tiber—three separate wars and two great truces were remembered— before the Romans sacked the city. Traditionally this was dated to 396 BC. Meanwhile, Rome fought wars against and in alliance with the Latins, the Hernici, and more distant opponents, the Volsci and the Aequi. The world within which these conflicts took place was tiny—barely 50 kilometres across—yet they were remembered on an epic scale. Even more mythologized was the Gallic sack of Rome, conventionally dated to 390 BC.¹² Traditions about this event varied wildly. Did the Gauls sack all or part of the city? Did they keep their ransom or was it recovered? Which Roman heroes were most responsible for survival and recovery? Or was it in fact an Etruscan army from Cerveteri which saw them off? That last version, unsurprisingly, occurs in Greek but not Roman accounts! Yet another set of traditions concerned the series of wars Rome fought against the peoples of the central Apennines.¹³ The Samnites were represented as barbarian highlanders. Roman tradition recorded three wars fought between the middle of the fourth century and the start of the third. No doubt these campaigns were in reality less coherent than they seemed in hindsight, and the Samnites were definitely not exactly the savages they were portrayed. In fact, monumental sanctuaries in the Abruzzi like that at Pietrabbondante made greater use of Greek architecture than did those of Rome in the same period.

Much of what was remembered is probably true, especially for the latter stages of the Samnite Wars that ended just before Pyrrhus' invasion. Dates were only put to them much later, of course, and many depended on 'synchronism' with events in Greek history. Rome apparently ejected its tyrants around the same date Athens expelled hers; the century-long grudge match with Veii in the fifth century looks suspiciously like the long and contemporaneous rivalry between Athens and Sparta; even the Gallic invasion sets Romans alongside Greeks as victims of temple-pillaging northerners, or else might be paralleled to the Persian sack of Athens. How much massaging was necessary to give Rome a *proper* past? How far were events telescoped or compressed to bring out the correspondences? What was omitted because it was useless to the narrative being created, or even contradicted it?

A second problem is that many stories seem to have clear moral ends. Time and again, individual Romans put the survival of the city ahead of their own interests. Horatius fought off Lars Porsenna's invading army in a series of single combats while the bridge over the Tiber was cut down behind him. Camillus, exiled by Rome, refused to

lead an enemy army against his ungrateful homeland. The epic poet Ennius summed up the ideology in the line

The Roman state depends on its ancient customs and heroes.¹⁴

Or consider how repeated power struggles between aristocratic patricians and the excluded masses (the *plebs*)—social conflicts of a kind quite common in the archaic Mediterranean—are again and again resolved by compromise and constitutional innovations. Stories of self-sacrifice and affirmations of social solidarity were comforting ideals for an age in which civil conflict was tearing the state apart. But they are hardly reliable history, any more than the stereotypes such as Livy's portrayal of Roman women either as victims of tyranny or inspirations to their men folk or both. All wars, naturally, were just wars, and the gods were always on Rome's side.

Ways and Means

There are hints that even at the very beginning of the Republic, Rome was already a powerful state. Polybius described three treaties, each made between Rome and Carthage in the period before the Pyrrhic War.¹⁵ The earliest, written in archaic Latin, was dated to the first year of the free Republic. Its terms seem sufficiently anachronistic by Polybius' day to be genuinely ancient, and he went to some lengths to try to explain them. In the treaty the Romans promise to respect Carthaginian territories in Sicily, Sardinia, and Africa and not to deliberately sail beyond 'the Fair Promontory' (probably Cap Farina just north of Carthage). The Carthaginians on their side promised not to intervene in Latium, either in the cities Rome controlled or in those she did not. Intervention of that kind was a realistic prospect. Three gold tablets from the Etruscan port city of Pyrgi, dating to about the same time, record dedications in both Etruscan and Punic to the goddess the Carthaginians called Astarte and the Etruscan ruler of Caere, Uni. Other provisions of this treaty provided for trade. Perhaps most significant of all, Rome treated on behalf of her allies as well as herself. The treaty, in other words, evokes a half-forgotten world of hegemonic politics and spheres of influence, a world in which larger communities dominated their smaller neighbours without absorbing them into formal empires, all at the end of the sixth century BC. We could compare the kind of leadership exercised by Carthage over other Punic cities, some of them named in the second of the three treaties, or Spartan leadership of the Peloponnese in the fifth century, and Athenian control of the islands and coasts of the Aegean only a little

later. Marseilles in southern Gaul, Syracuse in Sicily, and Tarentum in southern Italy all acquired regional influence of this kind. The history of the fifth and fourth centuries may be maddeningly obscure, but by the time Pyrrhus crossed the Adriatic in 280 at the invitation of the Tarentines, Rome had joined this small group of leading cities. The big question is how Rome managed to get to this point, given the small scale of her fifth-century wars within Latium and its adjacent districts.

Rome's comparative advantage over its rivals must have been institutional. No other explanation is really plausible. Geopolitics may have played a part, but Rome's location was not so good, nor so unique. The economic resources of Rome's immediate hinterland were not that impressive, especially when compared to those of Etruria or Campania. Romans enjoyed no technological edge over their opponents, not even in the field of warfare. The best that may be said is that at some period Roman citizen armies had become more experienced than those of some of their opponents. Nor is it really plausible to argue that Romans were more militaristic than their opponents. The celebrations of warriors in funerary art throughout central Italy, as well as those treaties, make it clear that it was not at all unusual for societies to be warlike. Short wars between neighbouring peoples were in fact probably more or less the norm, a competition for booty, prisoners, and prestige. It may be that many of the early wars remembered in Roman tradition consisted of raids and counter-raids of this kind.¹⁶

The difference came when Romans began to impose on their defeated opponents permanent obligations. During the fourth century it seems Romans began to institutionalize their position as pre-eminent city of Latium to create a federation of states with Rome at its heart. The innermost circle comprised the Latins, citizens of those communities with whom Romans enjoyed certain reciprocal rights, such as intermarriage and trade. Beyond them were other allies, the *socii*. Rome's allies were communities, not individuals, and to begin with most were bound to Rome by permanent and unequal treaties. Imposing a treaty of this kind almost always followed military victory. Greek cities concluded wars with treaties and then reverted to splendid autonomy. Rome had, it was said, agreed to several limited-term truces with Veii, and its treaties with Carthage imply equality between the parties. But the treaties that created allies were signs of permanent subordination. Allied states retained a separate citizenship and a notional internal autonomy—not that Romans did not intervene when they wished—but they had to supply troops when Rome demanded and they had very limited independence when it came to relations with other states. By the early second century BC, Romans regarded these lesser allies as subject to other kinds of authority too.

One of the earliest surviving decrees of the Senate is a bronze tablet recording restrictions issued in 186 BC on the worship of the god Bacchus. The decree applied throughout Italy. Defeated states also often lost land to Rome. Colonies were created in key strategic locations, like tiny Alba Fucens perched up in the Abruzzi to keep an eye on the neighbouring tribes. Other settlers were simply given conquered land to farm in return for paying a rent to the state. Roman control of Italy took the form of a growing network of bilateral alliances, an ever wider distribution of public land and settlers, and an increased sense of the prerogatives of power.

When a Roman army marched out against Samnites or Tarentines, Epirots or Gauls, its general commanded an army composed of citizens and allies.¹⁷ When consuls levied their citizen armies, each allied community was sent orders to provide their own quota of troops. Allied detachments were commanded by their own leaders, and brigaded alongside the Roman forces. Those leaders were drawn from the same sort of propertied classes as ruled Rome: Romans tended to support those classes in allied communities, siding with Greek aristocrats against democrats, and Etruscan nobles against their serfs.¹⁸ The ruling classes of Italian cities had much in common with each other, and a community of interest must also have consolidated Roman power. Athens's short-lived empire had foundered in part on the promotion of democracy among its lesser allies, and on strengthening the ideology of citizenship: Roman hegemony, by contrast, always stressed class solidarity among the elites. The seeds of an aristocratic empire had been sown. Rome exacted no regular taxes, nor any tribute in kind from its allies: they generally received a share of booty from victorious campaigns, and in some colonial foundations some of the Latins even received grants of land. Perhaps Roman rule did not seem entirely oppressive to members of the propertied classes, more like a movement that benefited those drawn into it.

Pyrrhus and History

King Pyrrhus had ruled the tiny Balkan kingdom of the Molossians since 306 BC. Macedon had expanded on the margins of the Greek world to produce Alexander, who died in 323 BC master of the Persian Empire and overlord of most of the Greek world. Pyrrhus' kingdom was on the margins of Macedonia, and he spent most of his career trying to imitate his great neighbour and predecessor. Epirus corresponds roughly to what is now north-west Greece. It looks westwards, towards the Adriatic, and beyond it to that part of southern Italy known as Magna Graecia (Greater Greece) because of the wealth accumulated there by the Greek cities founded in the

archaic period. The Greeks of southern Italy and Sicily had had their own complex history through the archaic and classical periods, fighting wars between each other and against and alongside Etruscans and Carthaginians. During the fifth century some of the Greek cities immediately south of Rome were captured and taken over by peoples from the Italian interior. Lucanians took control of Posidonia around 390 and ruled it for just over a century before Rome took control in 273 and made it into the Latin colony of Paestum. Majestic archaic Greek temples, Lucanian tombs, and a model Roman city stand side by side today.

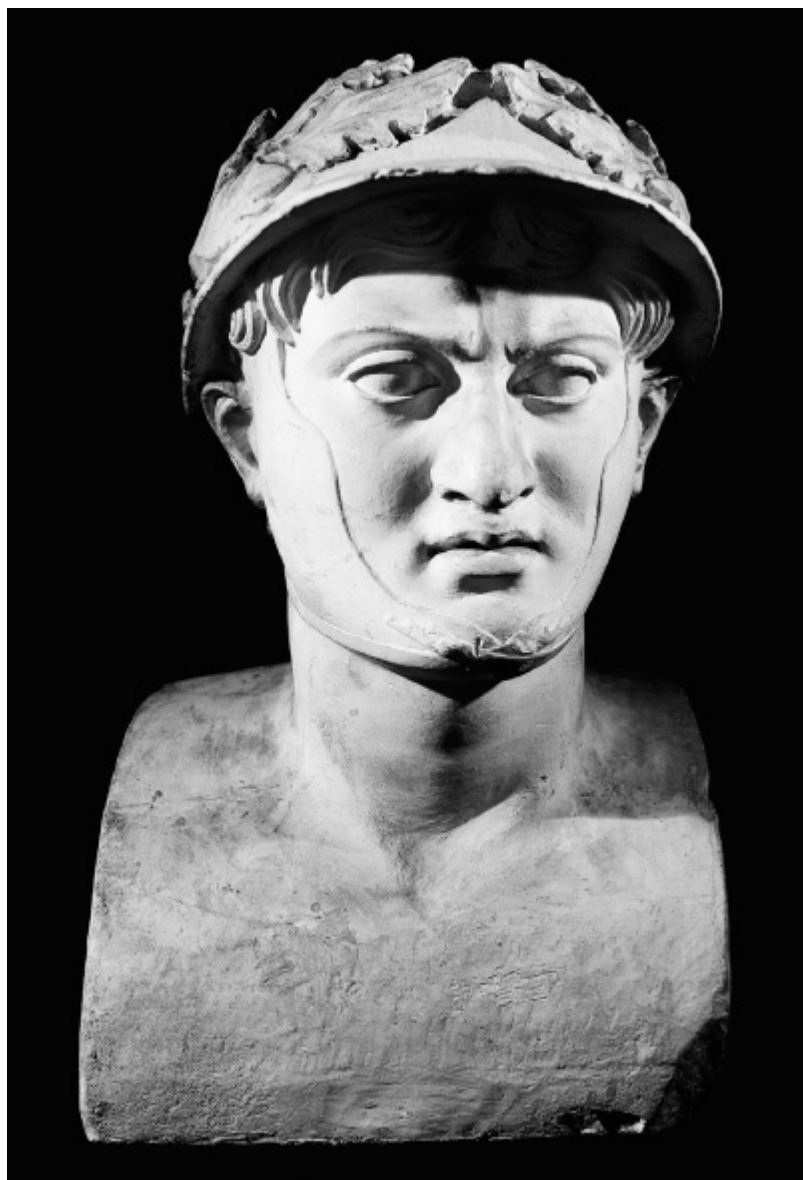


Fig 3. A bust of Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, Roman copy after a Greek original, from the Villa of the Papyri, Ercolano (ancient Herculaneum), Campania Region, Italy

But in the far south of the peninsula, and in Sicily, the larger Greek cities were more successful. If Rome and Carthage were hegemonic powers, then so were Greek Syracuse and Taranto. It was Taranto which called in Pyrrhus. This was nothing new for them. They had had an alliance with one of Pyrrhus' predecessors, and had tried to get help from Sparta and others in recent years. The novelty was the enemy, Rome, which in 284 had founded a colony on the Adriatic at Sena Gallica. For Rome, this was an extension of their wars in the Apennines: the name of the colony shows they had their eyes on the Gallic tribes of Marché and the Po Valley. But the Tarentines were right that the Romans had more grandiose ambitions. Two years later they intervened in the affairs of Rhegium, on the toe of Italy, and of Taranto's neighbour Thurii, leading to direct conflict. No one can have been in any doubt that Rome was extending its hegemony in all directions. Taranto was next.

Pyrrhus' expedition into southern Italy hardly changed the world. He arrived in 281, and inflicted a couple of defeats on the Romans: he may have won the battles but the cost was so high that it has given us the phrase 'a Pyrrhic Victory'. He was then invited to Sicily to fight Carthage on behalf of Greek cities there, which he did with less success. Returning to Italy he was defeated by a Punic fleet, and then fought another, less conclusive, battle with a Roman army. Those reverses prompted him to return to Epirus in 275. Pyrrhus was no Alexander. Three years later he was dead, killed in a botched attempt to wrest control of the Greek city of Argos from Macedon. The Romans took Taranto the same year. The significance of the Pyrrhic War, however, was that it put Rome on the Greek map. From this point on, Rome has proper history. One of the Greeks who wrote an account of Rome's war with Pyrrhus was his contemporary Timaeus, a native of Taormina in Sicily, who spent fifty years in exile in Athens writing the first connected history of the western Mediterranean. That work is lost, but it has left traces in the histories and geographies composed by Greeks and by Romans over the following centuries. Roman history was only a minor part of his output. But so little else had been written that it was a vital source even for the first Roman to write history, Fabius Pictor, and both directly and indirectly also for Polybius, the Greek historian who wrote a continuation during his own exile in Rome. Thanks to Timaeus and his continuators it is possible, from the third century on at least, to write detailed political history with secure chronology. Thanks to Pyrrhus, the scale of Roman hegemony was

now clear across the Mediterranean. Greek cities began to send embassies to Rome from the early second century. Among them were appeals for military help, as Greek cities and Balkan peoples asked the Romans to cross the Adriatic in the opposite direction to Pyrrhus.

Further Reading

Archaeological understanding of the appearance of cities and states in the early last millennium BC is progressing rapidly thanks not only to new evidence but also to advances in the way we understand it. The state of the question is presented in a series of essays edited by Robin Osborne and Barry Cunliffe and entitled *Mediterranean Urbanization 800–600 BC*. On the immediate vicinity of Rome see Christopher Smith's *Early Rome and Latium* (Oxford, 1996). An excellent archaeological introduction to the Etruscans is provided by Graeme Barker and Tom Rasmussen, *The Etruscans* (Oxford, 1998). Guy Bradley, Elena Isayev, and Corinna Riva's *Ancient Italy* (Exeter, 2007) gives a good sense of the wider Italian world into which Rome expanded.

Tim Cornell's *The Beginnings of Rome* (London, 1995) is now the standard introduction to early Roman history. Mario Torelli's *Studies in the Romanization of Italy* (Edmonton, 1995) gives an excellent sense of how archaeological and historical evidence can be effectively combined in the study of this period.

The earliest stages of Roman imperialism are the subject of William Harris's *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome 327–70 BC* (Oxford, 1979) and of several chapters of John Rich and Graham Shipley's *War and Society in the Roman World* (London, 1993). Jacques Heurgon's *The Rise of Rome to 264 BC* (London, 1973) remains full of interesting insights. Jean-Michel David's *Roman Conquest of Italy* (Oxford, 1996) tells the whole story up to the end of the Republic.



Map 2. The Mediterranean and its continental hinterlands, showing major mountain ranges and rivers



IV IMPERIAL ECOLOGY

Next comes the earth, that one part of nature that for her many gifts to us we honour with the name of Mother. She is our realm, as the sky belongs to the gods. She welcomes us when we are born, nurtures us as we grow, and when we are adults sustains us always.

(Pliny, *Natural History* 2.154)

From its foundation to the Arab conquests the story of Rome was played out over a millennium and a half. At first expansion was so slow that few outside Italy can have noticed it. But by the reign of Augustus the empire was bounded by the Atlantic to the west and the Sahara to the south, its northern frontier bisected temperate Europe, and its eastern edge was extended deep into western Asia. There the frontiers more or less rested until disintegration began at the end of the fourth century, once again slow at first but eventually collapsing into the Aegean world of seventh-century Byzantium. That fifty-generation tale of rise and fall is an epic one in human terms.

Geologically, however, a millennium and a half is the blink of an eye. The Roman Empire was a bubble that grew on the surface of the pond and then burst. During this time the physical environment of the Roman world—its landforms and climate in particular—hardly changed. New crops and methods of agriculture spread, but they had only a little impact on the landscapes Rome ruled over. Had Romulus been transported seven centuries forward at his death (rather than taken up into heaven) he might well have been amazed at what his heirs had achieved, but he would not have been puzzled at how they did it. All this is hard to imagine today, living as we do at the end of two centuries of accelerating technological change, change that is having major impacts on the entire biosphere and moves now at a pace hard to adjust to psychologically even in our own brief lifetimes. This chapter explores the long-term stability of the ancient world and the slow secular changes against which the whole of Rome's imperial story was played out.

The Environment in Classical Antiquity

Let us begin with the visible. The coastline of the Mediterranean 3,000 years ago was hardly different from what it is today. Slight changes can be spotted around the mouths of the larger rivers: the harbour of Ephesus is now a few miles from the coast, and half of Ostia, the port of Rome, has been washed away. Just off Pozzuoli in the Bay of Naples, a series of luxurious villas lie just a few metres under water. So does the great harbour of Alexandria. But these are marginal changes in highly susceptible locations. Sea levels did begin to rise gradually at the end of antiquity, but the only regions where this had a marked impact were low-lying areas such as the Fenland of eastern England and the areas around the Rhine mouth in the Netherlands, where late antique villages are built on low mounds, *terpen*, for protection against floods. Unsurprisingly, the ancients had no sense of geological time or incremental environmental change. There was almost no ancient science of seismology, and the explanations suggested for earthquakes were underground counterparts of those developed for meteorology.¹ A few writers were so committed to this steady-state idea of the world that they believed marble would, eventually, grow back from where it had been quarried.² Their world was eternal; the gods had wandered in the same forests and mountains they knew.

The Mediterranean is, in fact, shrinking, as the African tectonic plate moves northward. But this is happening very slowly. Tectonic movement generates vulcanism in Sicily, the Lipari Islands, and Campania, and earthquakes in central Italy, central and southern Greece, and western Turkey. There are extinct volcanoes in other parts of the Roman world—around Rome, for example, in central France, and southern Scotland—but the ancients had no memory of their eruptions. Volcanoes and earthquakes occurred in antiquity more or less where they occur most often today. Etna, into which the philosopher Empedokles reputedly threw himself, Vesuvius, which buried Pompeii and Herculaneum, and Santorini, which did the same for the Bronze Age city of Akrotiri, remain active today, indeed the most spectacular volcanoes of the Mediterranean world. Major earthquakes have struck in recent memory at the Isthmus of Corinth, where Poseidon the Earthshaker had his greatest sanctuary; in Aegean Turkey, the cities of which received five years' remission of tribute in AD 17 from the Emperor Tiberius to help them rebuild themselves after a devastating quake; and in central Italy, where a series of quakes in the middle of the first century AD perhaps inspired Seneca to write our first surviving discussion of them, in the sixth book of his *Natural Questions*.

Climate change moves at a faster pace. But in climatic terms, too, the ancient Mediterranean was very similar to the one we know

today.³ We live within the same interglacial period as the Romans, the Holocene, which began around 12,000 years ago with the retreat of the European glaciers and the northward expansion of the Sahara Desert. As the region warmed there were consequent movements of plant and animal species. Such movements are slow: in botanical terms the Mediterranean can be considered as still in postglacial recovery, and not all its native species of plants are yet well adapted to the current climate. Around 6,000 years ago the Mediterranean basin became significantly warmer, establishing today's pattern of mild wet winters and warm dry summers. 'Mild' means no long freezes which kill many species of tree and plant. 'Dry' means the Mediterranean as a whole was, and remains, an arid environment. There was never sufficient rainfall to support either dense forests or the grasslands on which herds of ruminants such as cattle, horses, and bison depend. Some parts of the Mediterranean world are exposed to droughts severe enough to cause many crops, including wheat, to fail as often as one year in four. Droughts of that kind are not predictable, and have knock-on effects on species that depend on susceptible crops. Humans that farm are among such species. Classical civilization was built in the shadow of scarcity and risk.⁴

The Roman Empire originated in the Mediterranean basin. But from the end of the last century BC, it had expanded into adjacent ecological zones. The climate changed most dramatically as one went north or south. This ecological gradient had economic consequences, since many of the central components of the polite culture adopted by local elite members across the empire remained Mediterranean in character. Wine was the alcoholic drink of choice, even where it was easier to produce beer: in the early first century AD some Mediterranean producers grew rich producing wine for export until grape varieties were developed that could survive in the Rhineland and even southern Britain. Olives could not (and still cannot) be cultivated in regions susceptible to frost. Yet olive oil was essential not only for cooking but also as fuel for lamps and for use in Roman bathing, where it was rubbed onto the skin and then scraped off along with any dirt. Olive oil was consequently traded northwards in great quantities.⁵ The southern half of the Mediterranean is notably warmer. From the late second century BC, great quantities of grain were being exported from modern day Tunisia, Sicily, and Egypt to cities in the northern half of the Mediterranean.⁶ By the early first century AD olive oil production had also increased in southern Spain and various parts of North Africa.⁷ North of the Mediterranean basin, temperate Europe had harsher winters and much more plentiful rainfall. That made it a much better area for raising large domesticates. Rome's European provinces would come to supply much of her cavalry. The

accumulating evidence of animal bones found on Roman period sites also shows much more beef eaten north of the Alps, with sheep and goat most evident in the assemblages from sites in the more arid south and east of the empire.⁸ Studies of faunal material (bones), of seeds and other biofacts, and of container amphorae all also show how the most powerful and privileged members of Roman society—local aristocrats and soldiers for the main part—were able to consume more or less what they liked wherever they were. The main limit on exchange across these sharp ecological contrasts (ecotones) was the cost of transport. Even the journey to north Italy made olive oil so expensive, according to St Augustine who was born and brought up in North Africa, that it was too expensive to burn lights all night long. Traffic beyond the Mediterranean basin was blocked at several points by mountain ranges. A few cities, located at the southern terminal of north–south river valleys or mountain passes, grew rich on trade: Aquileia and Aosta in Italy, Arles and Narbonne in southern France still impress visitors with their Roman period monuments.

The climate of Holocene Europe has not been completely stable. A relatively warm period in the Middle Ages was followed by the Little Ice Age which ran from 1300 to 1800 and was at its coldest at the end of the seventeenth century. Mean temperatures were perhaps a degree or more below those today, but this was enough to make the Thames freeze over on a regular basis. Evidence is mounting for a Roman Warm Period, one that perhaps raised the mean temperature as much as two degrees above those of today.⁹ The proposed peak is around 150 AD, with temperatures dipping until they began to rise again at the start of the Medieval Warm Period, perhaps around 900 AD. Geophysical evidence from ocean sediments and ice-cores, and tree-ring data, is supported by literary and archaeobotanical indications that some plant species existed further north or at higher altitudes during the early Roman Empire than they do today. The reality of this phenomenon remains very controversial. Unlike the early modern cold period, any change in antiquity was too slow to be noticed by ancient observers. But it may have been important. It has been pointed out that this Warm Period would coincide chronologically with the empire's furthest northward extent and with the Roman urban maximum. Might a period of warming have increased the productivity of southern Mediterranean agriculture, and made it easier to adapt crops for northern Europe at just the right moment? And might the subsequent cooling have put pressure on Roman agriculture (weakening the empire)? Or else on the barbarian peoples living north of the empire (driving them south)? Investigating these apparent correlations is a priority for future research.

A World of Farmers

Most ancient writers took their physical environment as a given. But they were well aware of the transformative power of one human activity, and that was farming.

Agriculture was an invention of the Holocene, one made independently on at least half a dozen occasions, around the globe. Each invention was based on different combinations of crops—cultigens—that could together supply the carbohydrate needs of humans, and some of their protein. Societies that experienced a Neolithic Revolution were utterly different from those that had preceded them. Population levels rose, permanent settlements were almost always necessary, and in these growing villages and cities, new social discipline was required. As Neolithic societies achieved a new order, so too did Neolithic landscapes. Areas suitable for agriculture were cleared, restricting hunting to marginal territories. Meat eating began to decline. Populations who lived on high-carbohydrate diets, in closer than ever proximity to each other, were less healthy than their ancestors. The domestication of successive animals improved the protein supply, but brought more diseases. Our leap down the food chain came at a heavy price, but once population levels had risen it was in effect irreversible.¹⁰

The nearest farming revolution to the Mediterranean world was also the earliest on the planet. It began around 7000 BC in the Near East in what is sometimes called the Fertile Crescent. This broad band of territory arcs from Jordan up through Syria and down through modern Iraq to the Persian Gulf, skirting the northern desert of the Arabian Peninsula. Successive innovations had their origins in this region, and in its surrounding upland margins, especially in Anatolia. The move from gathering to cultivating wild crops was followed by the domestication of animals first for food and later for hides, wool, milk, and traction. Arable farming moved across Europe at the rate of about 25 kilometres (15 miles) a generation, reaching the Atlantic by 3000 BC. The first farmers used tools of flint or obsidian, with handles of wood and bone, and they had no traction animals. Forests were hard to clear with stone axes, and wooden scratch ploughs (*ards*) were most effective on lighter soils. The main crops farmed were husked varieties of wheat, emmer, and einkorn, and in the most arid regions barley. Grains were supplemented in their diets by pulses and some green vegetables. Hunting and fishing made up a tiny proportion of most people's nutrition. Agriculture spread more rapidly in the Mediterranean world than in temperate Europe for two reasons. First, communications were easier across the islands and coastal settlements

of the inland sea than through the forests and mountains of Europe. Second, the aridity of the Fertile Crescent meant the ecological distance was less to the dry Mediterranean than to colder and wetter regions. These two factors together explain why population growth, cities, and states came to Mediterranean Europe before they reached the continental interior. But the Mediterranean only had a head start. Once northern populations had mastered the techniques of farming and developed ways to unlock the much greater potential of Europe's deeper soils, more abundant, and more dependable rainfall, the Mediterranean would lose its advantage. Today southern Europe is the poorer half of the continent, the recipient of subsidies provided by richer economies of the north. That shift took place in the Middle Ages. Classical antiquity is very largely the history of the period in which the Mediterranean kept ahead of temperate Europe in this respect.

The great story of the Mediterranean Holocene is one of successive movements from east to west. New cultigens, domesticated animals, technologies, and social forms all had their origins somewhere or other east of the Mediterranean world, most around the Black Sea, in Anatolia, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. Greek and Roman writers treated the Mediterranean as the normal centre of the world. The further one went away from it, the stranger were the peoples and plants and animals one encountered. But in reality the Romans' *orbis terrarum* was just one of several peripheries to the continental mass of Eurasia and Africa.¹¹ The Old World, in ecological and civilizational terms, has always had a common history, within which Mediterranean and European history has always been a secondary development.

The reasons are fundamental. Plant and animal species move most easily within the same latitudes, where mean temperatures are broadly similar. Migrations of species—both the re-colonization of Europe after the glaciers retreated, and the spread of the cultigens and domesticated animal species created by the first farmers—took place most easily between similar environments. The expansion of the Sahara accentuated this effect, creating a barrier between the Mediterranean and the rest of Africa. Ecologically, the Mediterranean world is a long corridor leading westwards out of western Asia. The climate becomes significantly wetter further west owing to the proximity of the Atlantic. Within the Mediterranean this is expressed in the differences in rainfall between the wetter west-facing coasts of Italy, Greece, and Turkey, and their more arid east-facing coasts. The further west along the corridor a species moved, the greater the contrast with the ecology within which it had originated. It is as if the corridor was at a gradient, sloping upwards, so making westward progress increasingly difficult.

Domesticated animals first appeared in Europe in the third millennium BC and again spread westwards. The origins of domestication were again mostly in the Near East, and the main domesticates were widespread by the start of the last millennium BC. Oxen and horses provided traction. Cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs provided meat. Cattle, sheep, and goats might be milked. Sheep and goats provided wool. All might provide bone and leather, and in sophisticated agricultural regimes manure as well. By the end of the second millennium BC, humans were using one or another variation of this complex of cultigens and domesticates across Europe and the Mediterranean. Geese had been domesticated in ancient Egypt. Chickens, descended from jungle fowl in the Far East, appeared sometime in the middle of the last millennium. (There are no chickens in the *Iliad*, but Socrates' last words were that he owed a cockerel to the god Asclepius.) Camels, domesticated much earlier in the Arabian peninsula, also moved progressively further west during the last millennium BC. Rabbits were confined to the Iberian peninsula until the turn of the millennium. Small animals might seem insignificant, but they were valuable as they might be bred fast and fed cheaply. In a world without refrigerators, small animals also posed fewer meat storage problems.

The main technological innovations in agriculture also preceded Rome. Most important was metallurgy, also invented in the east. Gold was easiest to extract, but was nearly useless for making tools. Copper and then bronze working began in the Near East in the middle of the fourth millennium BC. What really made the difference to agriculture was the appearance of abundant iron tools, cheaper to produce and harder wearing than other metals. Ironworking was almost certainly discovered in north-west Anatolia towards the end of the second millennium BC: from there it spread throughout the Old World, reaching the Yangtze, southern India, and Scandinavia by the middle of the last millennium BC. Iron agricultural tools were especially important in northern Europe where they made forest clearance and the cultivation of heavy soils much easier. The growth in the availability of iron tools in the middle of the last millennium BC runs parallel with agricultural and demographic expansion in the European interior. Evidence is provided not only by the great size of late Iron Age hillforts and other settlements, but also by the huge armies that began raiding and invading the Mediterranean world from the fourth century BC. Greeks and Roman were terrified by these invasions, but had no real notion of their causes.

The temperate Europe that Julius Caesar and his successors found when they began serious warfare north of the Alps was already tamed. There were no longer any hunter-gatherer populations. Not was there

any primeval forest. Forests had expanded in the early Holocene, following the retreat of the glaciers, but they had mostly been felled by the first farmers. The woodlands that replaced them were created and managed by human activity. Roman poets wrote of northern Europe as utterly savage, a continent of dense forests full of wild beasts. But Roman generals, and the tax collectors that followed in the early empire, will have appreciated the phenomenal agricultural productivity of European landscapes compared to the arid Mediterranean. Forests and game certainly survived, as they do today, but only on the higher ground between cultivated landscapes. Around the Mediterranean there was already the present-day landscape of *garrigues*, a characteristic type of shrubland rather like *chapparral* formed of plants that can tolerate the summer heat, alternating with small cleared plains on which cereals might be grown.

Prehistoric agriculture was not limited to the production of grains: woodlands and wetlands were also exploited; salt, vital for preserving meat and fish, was mined, gathered from coastal salt pans, and traded; large herds of livestock were raised, and short-range transhumance was already practised. The range of animal and plant species cultivated by prehistoric societies might seem relatively small, but the impact of farming on the early Holocene fauna was already phenomenal. The top predators who had expanded out of ice age refugia into Europe now diminished in number as their prey and habitats were removed. Lions disappeared from Europe and eventually western Asia, while populations of wolves and bears were fragmented. Greek heroes fought with savage beasts that threatened grain-growing lowlands, monsters like the Nemean Lion and the Calydonian Boar. Those myths reveal a world already imagined in terms of a stark opposition between civilization and the wilderness. And the wilderness was in retreat. Over the Iron Age and Roman centuries, smaller domesticated cattle replaced aurochs in temperate Europe, and bison and elk were restricted to the far north. Deer retreated into the remnant forests and resurgent woodlands. Hunting became rarer and less exciting. When the Emperor Trajan wanted to hunt game in Italy, he had to climb to the summits of the Abruzzi. The Roman generals who conquered the east were amazed to find Hellenistic kings had, in imitation of the Persian emperors, created reserves in order to preserve animals worthy of a royal hunt. The Persian word was *paradeisos*, giving us our term 'paradise'. Wilderness had become a scarce commodity, a luxury that needed to be conserved and cultivated. We can easily imagine this today, just as we can easily imagine the rich rewards that would follow Roman possession of the waking giant of temperate Europe.

Ecology and Empire

Imperial expansion since the fifteenth century has often had dire environmental consequences. One reason is that globalizing movements often connected up regions that had been out of contact for long periods. Most dramatic was the Columbian Exchange of plant and animal species that followed European discovery of the Americas, leading to extinctions and the catastrophic merging of disease pools, as well as the transformation of Old World diets with the introduction of coffee and chocolate, potatoes and cane sugar.¹² Then there have been deliberate modifications of colonial ecosystems in modern times, such as the creation of cotton and coffee plantations in the Americas, the introduction of cattle ranching into parts of North and South America, of sheep farming into Australasia, and the transplantation of maize from the New World into Africa. Cash crops often replaced subsistence agriculture, and the needs of distant imperial markets took priority over those of indigenous populations who were sometimes dispossessed, and sometimes conscripted to labour within new agricultural regimes. Slavery notoriously allowed the wholesale movement of human populations. There are some prehistoric precedents. Human expansion at the end of the Pleistocene era, into first Australia and later the Americas, seems to have led to the extinction of native megafauna, from two-tonne giant wombats and three-metre-tall kangaroos to the American lion and giant sloths. The settlement of the Pacific Islands and New Zealand was accomplished only because explorers took pigs, chickens, dogs, and various domesticated crops with them in their canoes.

Roman expansion did not have such dramatic effects. The empire expanded within a region the inhabitants of which used broadly the same domesticated species as themselves. When areas beyond the Mediterranean were eventually incorporated into the empire, this was usually just the latest phase in long histories of contact. As a result, Romans rarely encountered economies or ecologies very different from their own. The environmental changes that Roman expansion brought were, on the whole, more piecemeal and more subtle than those introduced by European empires.

All this marks an important difference between the ecologies of modern and ancient empires. Roman expansion was facilitated by what the conquerors shared with their new subjects. The first tax levied (on Sicily) was a simple tithe of grain, and when armies campaigned in Spain in the second century or Gaul in the first century BC, their local allies were expected to provide food. African Lepcis paid a great indemnity in olive oil, and the Frisians at the Rhine mouth

were taxed in hides. Taxation in kind was always an important part of Roman fiscal systems. Yet even when cash was required provincials could earn it simply by intensifying the production of crops they already grew, since these were the crops Romans already knew and desired. Monocultures and cash crops never squeezed out pre-existing regimes in the Roman period. We know of no disastrous experiments with new crops. The empire expanded into regions that were already productive, and in most areas did no more than stimulate a modest intensification.

The political unification of the Mediterranean has even been seen as simply the latest—political—phase in a much longer story, one that had begun with the spread of farming out from the Near East. It has been suggested that the limits of Roman expansion were set, in some regions at least, by the limits of this Old World agricultural complex. To be sure there was no ecological frontier dividing Roman from Persian spheres of influence, indeed that frontier cut through areas in north Syria that in every possible respect—cultural, religious, technological, and ecological—formed a unity. Yet Rome's northern frontier at points reached areas where the returns from this style of agriculture do not seem to have been impressive during the Iron Age. Perhaps Roman conquest reached an ecological limit in northern Britain or the Low Countries.¹³ Most of the long European frontier ran through rich agricultural land. Where Roman rule did meet real ecological limits was the Atlantic and the Sahara. The empire had successfully gained control of the southern part of that western corridor leading out of the Near East: threats came to it from north and east.

Roman expansion followed agricultural change, and brought with it few new technologies, species, or diseases: consequently, Roman conquest had no cataclysmic ecological impact. But this does not mean that Romans were not positively interested in promoting intensification. One sign of Roman interest is the care they took to learn from the agricultural regimes they incorporated. The only book the Romans took from the libraries of Carthage after the sack of the city in 146 BC was Mago's agricultural treatise which was then translated into Latin. Generals returning from the east brought back new species of plants, including cherry trees. Roman writers of the early empire were actually very well aware of how recently many nuts and fruit crops had been brought to Italy from the east. More than 40 per cent of the plants named in Columella's first-century AD book *On Agriculture* were Greek in origin. The *Natural History* of his near contemporary Pliny the Elder describes in detail the various trees and other crops found in different parts of the empire, and their nutritional and sometimes medical benefits. Medical texts produce a

wealth of information about cultivable species. Pliny was just as interested in the plants and animals of the western Mediterranean and even temperate Europe, but it is obvious from his account that the main direction of movement remained east to west.

Roman entrepreneurs not only brought eastern crops to Italy, but also attempted to transplant various Mediterranean species north of the Alps. Apples, pears, cherries, plums, and walnuts were introduced to northern Europe very early on, as were celery, garlic, asparagus, cabbage, and carrots. Chestnut, probably used for wood rather than primarily as a food source, followed a little later. What these trees and vegetables had in common—and what separated them from cereals—is that they required cultivation in gardens or orchards. Arboriculture involved a range of new specialized skills, such as grafting. It also required much greater inputs of energy and time in return for greater calorific and financial returns per hectare. The northward progress of these crops—like that of the vine—reflects the spread of Mediterranean taste, as well as of agricultural knowledge. Carbonized remains of these crops appear on settlement sites alongside those of others that could not be domesticated north of the Alps including figs, chickpeas, pistachios, almonds, pine kernels, and melons. The expansion of arboriculture and gardening was also closely linked to urbanization. Not only is it labour intensive but it also relies on levels of consumer demand most easily found where populations are densely packed and relatively prosperous. It also offers vital supplements to a diet high in carbohydrates, providing sugar, protein, and vitamins. It was urban populations that had the greatest needs of these supplements.¹⁴ It is no accident we know most about it from Roman Egypt and the environs of Rome, the most urbanized parts of the ancient world.

More generally, the spread of arboriculture allows us to observe Romans as enthusiastic adopters of new cultigens. Profit and the desire for a wider range of tastes were no doubt key motivators. But there was a sound ecological logic too. The principal weakness of the earliest agricultural regimes in all parts of the world was the small number of cultigens on which each depended. Dependence on a single crop is enormously risky, and diversification provided a key buffer against crop failure. Hence the early importance of pulses, and the steady growth of the variety of grains cultivated, naked wheats joining emmer and einkorn alongside spelt and barley, and rye, oats, and millet being grown in some regions. The wider range of cereals did not only provide better matches for particular local microclimates. Barley was less favoured as a food but could resist drought, millet could be grown over the summer, chestnuts and other nuts provided a key protein source when crops failed, or fodder for pigs when they did

not. The range of cultigens increased over time.

Other ecological niches were subjected to the same process of intensification: wetlands and mountains, woodlands and the pre-desert. Roman construction technology allowed a few innovations here, most notably in the imperial period. Injections of capital are difficult to document, but they must lie behind some agricultural development such as the construction of massive sheep pens on the plain of the Crau in south-east France, and the development of industrial-scale production of fish-sauces. A small amount of irrigation farming was introduced, a spin-off of the aqueducts bringing water from highland areas down to the cities of the plain.¹⁵ Terraces were constructed across seasonal river courses in the Libyan pre-desert to catch floodwater. Drainage of marshes took place across the empire from central Italy to the English Fenlands. Hydraulic engineering allowed for advances in fish-farming. Establishments dedicated to salting and pickling fish appeared wherever catches were abundant, including on both sides of the straits of Gibraltar, up the Atlantic coasts of Spain and Gaul. The processing, storage, and transportation of agricultural produce was in general improved. Large mills driven by water, animals, and slave labour supplemented hand mills, and large-scale olive presses were constructed.¹⁶ Advances in granary construction and harbour installations went hand in hand with the manufacture of earthenware containers and ships better adapted to the transport of bulky produce. Road infrastructure was improved, perhaps first for military reasons, but others benefited too. Closely allied to this was increased production in the most common urban productions, such as textile production.¹⁷

A different form of intensification is evident in stock-raising. The scale of sheep farming increased in several parts of the empire, including Italy and south-east Gaul where very large flocks clearly catered to demand from outside the region. There were highly successful efforts made to increase the size of the main meat-producing domesticates: the growth of cattle of various breeds is now well documented from faunal remains in Italy. North of the Alps it occurred so rapidly that it seems almost certain that new breeds were introduced. This reversed a long trend in Europe towards smaller and smaller animals, showing very clearly the impact of new priorities and techniques.

The cumulative impact of these improvements was economically significant. Appreciating them helps us understand how the Roman Empire sustained, in such an unpromising environment as the Mediterranean basin, a ratio of consumers to producers that rose by the early third century from one in ten to three in ten in some regions. City life brought a demand for bread instead of porridge and for a

more varied diet. The archaeologically visible result was a proliferation of bakeries and food markets, *macella*, that sold fresh meat, vegetables, and dairy products. Improved communications and the muscle of civic and imperial authorities and of landlords made such a diet possible for a minority. But the long-term environmental impact was limited. When the cities (and so their aggregate demand) shrank, and when authorities could no longer maintain roads, aqueducts, and the like, rural economies shifted back to a more local scale. The Roman urban boom left few lasting environmental traces, except in respect of mining, which generated levels of heavy-metal pollution that would not be reached again until the Industrial Revolution. Repeated attempts to convict Roman civilization of causing deforestation and soil erosion have failed to convince. Roman expansion led to an intensification of production, not the wholesale transformation of their environment. Their imperial ecology was very different from that of the modern age.

Further Reading

The most influential environmentally organized account of antiquity is Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell's *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford, 2000), which has already prompted many responses, some of which are gathered in William Harris's *Rethinking the Mediterranean* (Oxford, 2005). Equally innovative is Robert Sallares's *The Ecology of the Ancient Greek World* (London, 1991). Conditions on the Steppe are discussed in Roger Batty's *Rome and the Nomads* (Oxford, 2007). Brent Shaw's essays on North Africa are collected in *Environment and Society in Roman North Africa* (Aldershot, 1995). No environmentally oriented account of Roman temperate Europe has yet been produced, but there is much of relevance in Chris Wickham's *Framing the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2005).

A realization of quite how precarious conditions could be in parts of the ancient Mediterranean is relatively recent. A pioneering collection of answers to the question of how ancient farmers managed was Paul Halstead and John O'Shea's *Bad Year Economics* (Cambridge, 1989). On the means through which classical civilization was sustained in the face of these stresses the fundamental work is Peter Garnsey's *Famine and Food Supply in the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge, 1988).

The impact of Roman agriculture and especially mining on the environment is a topic of current debate. A good starting point is the collection edited by Graham Shipley and John Salmon, *Human*

Landscapes in Classical Antiquity (London, 1996). A vivid account of the environmental cost of ancient mining is presented in chapter 7 of David Mattingly's *Imperialism, Power and Identity* (Princeton, 2011). Two very well-written introductions to the prehistoric background are Tim Champion et al., *Prehistoric Europe* (London, 1984) and Graeme Barker's *Prehistoric Farming in Europe* (Cambridge, 1985).

KEY DATES IN CHAPTER V

- 272 BC** Rome defeats Tarentum, the major Greek city of southern Italy, just three years after the departure of Pyrrhus
- 264-241 BC** First Punic war resulting in the defeat of Carthage and Rome's first overseas province, Sicily
- 218 BC** Battle of Telamon marks the defeat of the Gauls of northern Italy. Conquest and colonization of the area resumed after the defeat of Hannibal
- 218-201 BC** Second Punic war, during which Hannibal invaded Italy and remained there until 203
- 216 BC** Battle of Cannae, Rome's most serious defeat at the hands of Hannibal
- 213-211 BC** Siege and capture of Syracuse by Marcellus
- 202 BC** Battle of Zama. Scipio defeats Hannibal just outside Carthage
- 197 BC** Philip V of Macedon defeated at the battle of Cynoscephalae. The next year Flamininus declares the freedom of the Greeks
- 198-188 BC** Roman Rome and Antiochus III of Syria. Antiochus defeated first at Thermopylae and then Magnesia, and in the Treaty of Apamea in 188 renounced all Seleucid claims to Asia Minor
- 189 BC** Lucius Vulso campaigns against the Galatians in central Anatolia
- 184 BC** Censorship of Cato the Elder
- 168 BC** Perseus of Macedon defeated at the battle of Pydna. Macedonian kingdom dismantled
- 168 BC** Seleucid King Antiochus IV is forbidden to invade Egypt by an envoy of the Senate
- 167-150 BC** Capture of Megalopolis a hostage in Rome, where he becomes a friend of Scipio Africanus and accompanies him on his campaigns
- 146 BC** Third Punic war culminates in the Roman destruction of Carthage
- 146 BC** Destruction of Corinth
- 138 BC** Capture of the Celtiberian stronghold of Numantia in Spain
- 133 BC** Eumenes III of Pergamum dies leaving his kingdom to Rome

V

MEDITERRANEAN HEGEMONY

What man can be so frivolous and lazy that he does not wonder how it has come about, and under what kind of political regime, that almost the entire civilized world has in less than fifty-three years been brought under the sole rule of Rome? These events are unprecedented.

(Polybius, *Histories* 1.1.5)

The Rivals of Rome

The expansion of Roman influence within Italy, related in [Chapter 3](#), had been a slow process. But during the century and a half that followed Pyrrhus' invasion, Roman hegemony mushroomed out to cover the entire Mediterranean world. That did not mean that second-century BC Rome (yet) ruled a well-ordered tributary state, divided into territorial provinces over which were extended imperial systems of law and taxation, administered by a colonial bureaucracy. Roman rule remained, in modern terms, both informal and indirect. Supremacy meant simply that Rome no longer had any rival in the region. And Polybius was correct that the rulers of Rome in the mid-second century BC (many of whom he knew well) felt they could issue orders to whomever they wished. This chapter tells how this was achieved.

Rome's unification of the Mediterranean was the culmination of processes of political growth that characterized the last millennium BC.¹ By the third century, Mediterranean politics was dominated by a small number of great powers. At the western end of the Mediterranean, that meant Rome and—until 201 BC—Carthage. Less powerful cities retained their nominal independence in North Africa, Italy, and southern France. Around them were tribal societies of various kinds and sizes. During the third century the biggest cities had either challenged Rome and lost—as had Syracuse and Tarentum—or else were now subordinate allies, like Marseilles and the major cities of Etruria and Campania. East of the Adriatic, the political map was dominated by the kingdoms formed when Alexander's empire fragmented on his death in 323 BC. The Big Three were Antigonid Macedon, Seleucid Syria, and Ptolemaic Egypt. Around them were a

plethora of smaller states. These included Persian successor kingdoms in Anatolia, breakaway Greek kingdoms in Afghanistan and western Turkey, federal leagues of communities in southern and north-west Greece, and a few independent city-states including Sparta, the naval power Rhodes, and a much diminished Athens. This was the Greek—sometimes called the Hellenistic—world into which Rome would expand. No nation could take on and defeat every single city and tribe, and the Romans did not try. Hegemony only required the defeat of all conceivable rivals. That was the process that Polybius claimed had taken less than fifty-three years, from the outbreak of the second Punic war, that is, until the defeat of Macedon in 167 BC.

Events unfolded at a breakneck pace.² The retreat of Pyrrhus, his death, and the fall of Taranto in 272 removed all Rome's rivals south of the Apennines. Carthage and Rome had allied against Pyrrhus, but their spheres of influence were now so close it is rather surprising it took them until 264 to fall out. The cause was, unsurprisingly, control of the island of Sicily that lay between them. The first Punic war, fought mainly in naval engagements around the Tyrrhenian Sea, ended in 241 with Rome controlling most of Sicily as a province, and the remainder through an alliance with Syracuse. Shortly afterwards Romans seized control of first Sardinia and then Corsica. The second Punic war broke out in 218 when spheres of influence in Spain clashed. A new Punic empire had been created there, based on New Carthage (Cartagena) and the rich silver mines in the vicinity. Geopolitical considerations suggest the competition for influence in Iberia was as inevitable as it had been in the case of Sicily: Roman historians preferred to believe the real reasons lay in bitter resentment of Rome fostered by the Barcid dynasty of whom Hannibal was the most famous member. The conflict begun in Spain was swiftly carried into Italy by Hannibal's audacious march through southern France and across the Alps. Initial victories at Trasimene (217) and Cannae (216) seemed to bring Rome to the brink of disaster, and Hannibal went on to occupy much of the south, detaching Roman allies. But the long-feared assault on Rome never materialized. During the deadlock Rome made advances in other theatres, especially in Spain and Sicily. After more than a decade in southern Italy, Hannibal was eventually forced to return to North Africa to meet a Roman army outside the walls of Carthage itself. Scipio's victory at Zama in 202 ended the war.

Between the first and second Punic wars, while the Barcids had been busy in Spain, the Romans had continued to extend their influence in Italy, especially over the Gallic peoples north of the Apennines.³ Major victories had been won over Gallic armies at Telamon in 225 and Clastidium in 222. As soon as Carthage was defeated, Roman generals resumed this priority. During the 180s a

series of colonies were founded north of the Apennines, anchored on the via Aemilia that remains today the main highway down the Po Valley.⁴ Roman magistrates led campaigns against either Gauls or Ligurians almost every year until the start of the third Macedonian war in 168. There were further campaigns in Liguria in the 150s. By the end of the second century the whole area up to foothills of the Alps was in effect a Roman province. The defeat of Hannibal allowed Rome to increase its influence elsewhere in Italy too: exemplary punishments were handed out to former Roman allies who had defected to the Punic cause, and much of their territory was confiscated.⁵ New Roman colonies were founded on spear-won territory in southern Italy, some imposed on existing cities and others on greenfield sites. Syracuse had picked the wrong side in the war: her defeat left Sicily entirely under the rule of the Roman praetors. Spain too was now available for conquest, thanks to the campaigns of Scipio which had swept the Carthaginians out of the peninsula. By 197 there were two provinces, one in the south where local societies were most urbanized and where there were rich supplies of silver, and another in the north-east, the territory of the Iberians. Up until the end of the 170s there were generally four legions in Spain at any one time. Like the campaigns in north Italy, these wars could usually be put on hold when Rome was occupied elsewhere, and started up again when other fronts closed down. Major campaigns restarted in Spain in the 150s and culminated in great wars against the Celtiberians of the interior that only ended with the capture in 133 of their great citadel at Numantia. There were other conflicts around the Alps in this period too, and two short but ferocious wars in the Rhône Valley in the mid-120s. Not all these campaigns were of Rome's choosing. There were colonists and settlers to defend in northern Italy, and Rome faced attacks from the Lusitanians in Spain and the Arverni in Gaul. Nor was Rome always fighting flat out: there were decades of intensive warfare, and others when fewer troops were in the field each year.⁶ All the same, it is impossible to avoid the impression that Rome was now geared up to more or less continuous expansion and that the Roman west was always available when more lucrative or threatening campaigns were not available.

For Rome's greatest rivals during the second century BC were the rich monarchies of the eastern Mediterranean. It was the humbling of the great kingdoms of Antigonid Macedonia, Seleucid Syria, and Ptolemaic Egypt that Polybius had in mind when he wrote of Rome's takeover of the entire civilized world. Those kingdoms had squabbled since the death of Alexander the Great for control of the Greek world and its Balkan, Asian, and African hinterlands. The defeat of Carthage in 202 left Rome free to join—and end—this competition.

Two years after Scipio's victory over Hannibal at Zama, Roman armies crossed the Adriatic to take on Philip II, King of Macedon. The reasons remain a matter of controversy. One provocation was a treaty made between Philip and Hannibal when the latter was still a threat to Rome. Another may have been earlier attempts by Philip to expand his interests at Roman expense in the Adriatic, although this was really a minor part of his wider ambitions in the Balkans and beyond. A number of Greek states were anxious about Philip, and Rome's status as a world power was now clearer than ever. Embassies came to Rome from Attalus of Pergamum, from Rhodes, and from Athens, and Roman ambassadors were sent to other parts of Greece. But the Romans could certainly have safely ignored these requests and left Macedon alone had they wished for peace. Clearly they did not. Or at least a majority did not, since the first time the Roman assembly was asked to approve war it refused. That decision was rapidly reversed. What arguments were used to persuade the people to assent? Were they terrorized with stories of Philip's aggression, reminded of his past hostility as Hannibal's ally, or just encouraged with the hope of more booty? During the Hannibalic war Rome had fought a brief war with Macedon: in 211 the Romans had made an alliance with the Aetolians of north-west Greece agreeing that in any joint actions the Aetolians should keep any territory captured, while Rome would take any slaves and booty. Not much had come of this in practice, but perhaps Macedon was still looked on as a good place to plunder. And perhaps a generation of warfare had actually accustomed Rome to conflict, inspiring a new generation of Roman leaders to seek conflicts in which to distinguish themselves, and a new generation of soldiers to seek their fortune in wars of conquest?

Whatever the reasons, the vote for war was won in 200. The next year a Roman army invaded Macedonia, once again in alliance with the Aetolians. The command passed to Titus Quinctius Flamininus in 199. Hard fighting in the Balkans and tough diplomacy gave him the advantage over Philip and made allies of the Achaean League, to which most of the important cities of southern Greece belonged. Philip rejected terms and Flamininus pushed on to defeat him decisively early in 197 at the battle of Cynoscephalae. Rome's new allies the Achaeans were delighted. But the Aetolians felt they had not received all the rewards they deserved. Macedon was left intact, but compelled to stay out of southern Greece, and a heavy indemnity was imposed as in fact it had been on Carthage. At the Isthmian Games in 196 Flamininus declared the freedom of the Greeks. The language of his proclamation and its location echoed Alexander's proclamations at Corinth in 337 BC, and also much subsequent Hellenistic diplomacy. Romans had evidently learned the diplomatic manners of the Greek

east. Their ambitions were different but they were not about to let any other power replace Macedon. The Seleucid King Antiochus III was warned off and Flamininus fought another campaign against Nabis, tyrant of Sparta, before in 194 Roman armies returned home.

Diplomacy did not keep Antiochus at bay. In 192 he crossed into Greece, now in alliance with the Aetolians. The Roman response was immediate. Antiochus was met and defeated at Thermopylae in 191 and retreated to Asia, pursued by the consul Scipio (the brother of Africanus the conqueror of Carthage) who would take the title Asiaticus after this campaign. Antiochus was defeated at Magnesia, sued for peace, and by the Treaty of Apamea signed in 188 renounced all Seleucid claims of territory in Asia Minor. Like Macedon, the Seleucid kingdom was permitted to survive on condition it paid an indemnity, and like Macedon its sphere of influence had been limited. The western Balkans, southern Greece, and Anatolia were now no longer dominated by any of the great powers.

Roman armies campaigned in these regions for a little while. During 189 Fulvius Nobilior fought wars in Ambracia on Macedon's western borders, and Manlius Vulso campaigned against the Galatians of central Anatolia. Both wars were infamously profitable, and Rome swooned before spectacular triumphs and monuments. But when the booty was gone, the Romans left too, abandoning their former allies and defeated enemies to jostle for positions in a new world order. From now on all politics in the eastern Mediterranean was referred to Rome. Embassy after embassy sought the support of the Senate or its envoys in tiny disputes. Rome's allies, like the kingdom of Pergamum, the Achaeans, and (for a while) Rhodes, grew in influence. Yet often Romans seemed uninterested in what they did. Military attention was diverted to wars in north Italy and Spain. Philip himself died in 179 and was succeeded by Perseus, who cautiously began building up alliances with other kings. His ambitions were denounced to the Senate by Eumenes of Pergamum in 172 and the next year Roman soldiers were back in the Balkans. This third Macedonian war took a little longer to bring to a conclusion, perhaps because Rome's allies seemed not wholeheartedly in support. But in 168 Aemilius Paullus defeated Perseus at Pydna. The kingdom of Macedon was abolished, its territory divided between four republics. Roman armies sacked city after city; a rumoured 150,000 people were enslaved in Epirus. The king was captured and brought back to march through Rome in the triumphal procession of his victor. Meanwhile the leading members of anti-Roman factions from the cities of Greece were taken into exile in Italy. Polybius was among them.

The same year Antiochus IV tried to restore Seleucid fortunes by invading Egypt. A Roman envoy, Popilius Laenas, met him and his

army just outside Alexandria and ordered him back home. Antiochus asked for time to consider his response. Laenas drew the original line in the sand, a circle around the king, and insisted:

Before you step out of that circle give me your reply to bring to the Senate.⁷

Antiochus had no option but to obey. Livy followed up this anecdote of Antiochus with an account of how the Senate had received embassies from the Seleucids and the Ptolemies, and ambassadors from the kings of Pergamum and Numidia, bringing congratulations on the defeat of Macedon.



Fig 4. The monument at Delphi that commemorated Aemilius Paullus' victory at Pydna

Roman hegemony did not, however, ensure political stability. Greek observers were evidently a little puzzled by Roman objectives east of the Adriatic. Rome's victories in 197, 188, and 168 had each changed the balance of power in the east. Yet, after each campaign, the Roman armies had returned home. Between these wars their diplomacy seemed inconsistent. Even Polybius, who had the best position of all to observe Roman policy-making in action, was caught out, believing a watershed had been reached after the obliteration of Macedon. Beginning with his deportation to Rome in 167 BC, he spent nearly twenty years as a kind of honoured prisoner in Rome, in the process getting to know some of the leading figures of the day including Cato the Elder and the Scipio brothers. Yet he was not ready

for the sequel.

During the aftermath of Pydna, relations between Rome and her allies in the eastern Mediterranean deteriorated rapidly. Rhodes was felt not to have given the support it might have done in the war with Perseus. In 167 it was punished when the Romans declared Delos a free port in a successful attempt to damage Rhodian commercial interests. Next, Pergamum fell temporarily from grace, and its power in Asia Minor was limited. During the 150s and 140s Rome made sporadic diplomatic interventions in conflicts between the cities and kingdoms of Anatolia, and they kept an interest in succession disputes in Syria and Egypt. But there were no more military expeditions until 149 when a pretender to the throne of Macedon had some brief success before being defeated by a Roman army supported by Pergamene allies. But Roman attention had been attracted. By now Rhodes and Pergamum were back in favour, but the Achaean League was not. To the horror of Polybius, war broke out between Rome and the Achaeans, and this time Roman victory did not simply result in indemnities and loss of territory. The ancient city of Corinth was sacked, its treasures plundered by Mummius and given to his soldiers and as rewards to allied communities, and the city of Corinth was abolished. This was an atrocity not seen in the Greek world since Alexander the Great had destroyed the city of Thebes as a symbol of what he could do if he wished.

Polybius' world revolved around Greece. But the Romans had a different perspective. The Achaean war was something of a sideshow. During the 150s more Roman eyes had been fixed on the recovery of Carthage. It posed no realistic threat to Rome, even if its offer to pay off its war indemnity early showed its economic recovery. Its political and diplomatic actions were confined to Africa, and seem mostly designed to protect itself from the neighbouring Numidian tribes. But successive Roman embassies returned from Carthage to fuel domestic anxieties. Cato the Elder was among the most influential advocates of striking at Carthage before it could grow any stronger. Eventually the Senate issued an ultimatum requiring them to move their city inland, an impossible demand. The result was a Roman invasion in 149 and the capture of the city in 146. Polybius travelled with Scipio Africanus on the campaign that resulted in the final destruction of Carthage and watched the city burn. Like Corinth it was simply destroyed, and in the same year. The synchronism provides a vital clue to the Roman perspective.⁸ Greeks inhabited a political world centred on the Aegean Sea, a world of old cities surrounded by new kingdoms—and Rome. They were not used to being on the periphery of politics. Yet Romans were just as interested in Carthage as in Corinth.

Mid-Republican Imperialism

Rome's expansionist dynamic looks clear enough to us, but maybe did not seem quite so obvious to the Romans. Did they conceive of Mediterranean hegemony as a goal? If not, they would not have been the only nation to discover their imperial vocation only in retrospect. Romans had, after all, no model of empire to follow. Greek writers of the imperial age sometimes set up Alexander as a kind of rival to Rome. But during the last centuries BC, Alexander was mostly looked back on as a model king and conquering general. When Roman hegemony *was* thought of as a system, it was compared to the hegemonies of other 'tyrant cities', Athens and Sparta above all.

The first attempt to account for the rise of Rome—the first we can read, that is—was that of Polybius. Polybius' answer was based on the superiority of Rome's institutions relative to those of her rivals, although it also gave roles to chance and geography, and also to the virtue and foolishness of various individuals. Perhaps his investigations helped the Roman ruling class formulate their own ideas about hegemony. Or perhaps they reflect in part ideas they already had. Fragments of Cato the Elder's writings sometimes seem to contain some of the same ideas, for example the notion that Roman institutions and public conduct had worked better in the recent past. But then Roman society was still a very small world, and intellectual society smaller still. Perhaps the clearest sign that the Roman elite agreed that the world was now subject to their power alone was the decision to destroy both Carthage and Corinth. Ancient wars typically ended in treaties. The obliteration of two ancient cities is one indication that Romans had come to think of their hegemony as unlike any other.

Roman expansion in the middle Republic was remorseless. No sooner was one war done than another was started. Republican Rome sometimes had several fronts open at the same time, and two years in a row rarely went by between wars. War touched all levels of society. It was difficult to have a successful political career without also holding one or more military command. Between 10 and 25 per cent of the male population were under arms during any one campaigning season. These figures bear comparison with the level of participation in warfare of the general population of European countries during the First World War. During the worst days of the Hannibalic war, between 218 and 215 BC, one in six adult males died on the battlefield. But when a campaign went well, the booty was spread widely, if unevenly, among the participants. During the conquest of Italy, some citizens would be allocated grants of land and places in new colonies

on spear-won territory. The whole population of the city witnessed the triumphal processions that followed each successful campaign. Prisoners and booty were paraded through the streets in a pageant that might last days. Games and feasts were provided and afterwards temples were built to repay the gods for the favour they had shown Romans during combat.⁹ Looking back on Rome's rise to power, it is very tempting to look for some one single force propelling their martial march through history. Many Romans eventually came to believe in a divine mandate, while their enemies saw them as unusually militaristic. The reality is more complex.

Explanations for Roman expansion tend to stress either internal or external factors. Internal factors include the variety of political and economic pressures that made Romans take opportunities for conflict when they presented themselves. External factors include actual threats (both real and imagined), but also the political configuration of the world into which Rome expanded. Naturally internal and external factors interacted, the external environment shaping the evolution of Roman society as it sought ways to out-compete its rivals and in turn the internal dynamics of Roman society impacting on the wider world. Over time, Rome behaved less and less like other states, for example by dropping the conventional diplomatic language with which it first of all presented itself to the Greeks. The more powerful Rome became the more it shaped the world it had to deal with.

Let us begin with internal factors. I have already described how Rome became hooked on annual warfare probably during the fifth century BC. The attraction of booty and prestige is obvious; both could be represented as in the interests of the community as well as of the individuals concerned. But this is not a sufficient explanation for Roman imperialism since many ancient states were geared to frequent warfare, and very few became hegemonic powers. It was the structure of alliances built up from the fourth century that locked Rome into expansion. The process had its own outward dynamic. It was not simply that the Romans could only exercise their leadership by summoning the allies to fight alongside them: the more peoples were reduced to allied status, the further away from Rome potential enemies came to be located. There are many parallels for such a process, from the imperial expansions of the ancient Near East to those of the New World empires of the Aztecs and the Inka.¹⁰ Meanwhile Roman institutions, Roman ideology, and even Roman religion were progressively adapted to incremental expansion.¹¹ I described already how it was institutions—not technology or motivation or resources—that gave Rome its comparative advantage over its earliest enemies. But those institutions—the sequence of triumphs, the aristocratic families tending their ancestors' victory

temples, the frequent distributions of booty and especially of land—raised expectations. Once again there is a close parallel with the success of the Qin state in contemporary China, one among a group of rival kingdoms in what is known as the Warring States Period, which had in the fourth century BC developed a powerful set of administrative and agrarian systems, and the ideologies to accompany them that enabled it to mobilize land and population much more effectively than its rivals. Qin expansion too involved drawing on the resources of the conquered and programmes of settlement, and culminated in 221 BC in the creation of the first unified empire.¹² Unlike Rome, however, it then faced no external rivals of equivalent power.

Rome emerged from Italy into a hostile world. Stopping expansion after the defeat of Pyrrhus might have been possible—after all, Augustus would later be able to stop the much bigger juggernaut of late first-century expansion—but only if Italy been a remote island. The presence of Carthage close at hand, and the anarchic politics of the eastern Mediterranean, required the expansionist dynamic to be stepped up, not wound down. By the time Rome and her allies faced no serious competition within Italy, their future rivals were already watching them with apprehension. The wars with Carthage, Macedon, and Syria were of a different nature from any that Rome had fought within Italy. They were larger in scale, were sometimes fought on multiple fronts, and once started they were difficult to disengage from until a decisive victory had been won. The Punic Wars threatened Rome with much more than humiliation in the event of defeat. Hannibal was quite successful in detaching some allies from Rome. Signs of the seriousness with which the Senate treated Hannibal's victory at Cannae in 216 included a collection of almost all gold jewellery from Roman matrons, and apparently also the live burial of a Gallic couple and a Greek couple in the Roman forum. The kingdoms of the east were also serious opponents. When Antiochus III invaded Greece in 191 he was making an explicit challenge to Roman hegemony in the Balkans. Like Pyrrhus, he saw himself following in the steps of Alexander, but his resources were vastly greater. His kingdom stretched to the border of modern Pakistan. He had personally defeated rebellions in its eastern provinces and Anatolia, had won back southern Syria and Asia Minor from Egypt, and conquered Armenia and Afghanistan. Rome, in other words, was faced with genuine and major threats in the late third and early second centuries BC.

The result was a transformation of Roman warfare and the way Romans managed their hegemony. For a start the number of legions levied each year increased significantly, being reduced in the 160s

only after the defeats of Carthage, Macedon, and Syria, the completion of the conquest of Italy, and major advances in Spain. Back in the fourth century it had generally been possible to confine warfare to a short summer campaigning season, allowing generals to revert to being civil magistrates and soldiers to working their farms at other times of the year. That alternation came under increasing pressure as some wars grew in scale and length, and as theatres of war were increasingly located further and further from Rome. Rome found herself fighting Carthage by sea in the third century, and the second-century wars in Spain and the Balkans required generals to lead out armies that might not return for years. Magistrates could not always command distant armies along with all their other duties. The Roman elite, innovative as ever, developed new ways of managing warfare. Former magistrates, and sometimes just experienced leaders, were increasingly given commands, and some were extended year after year. Generals operating overseas had to be allowed greater freedom of action too, to decide in effect on war and peace within only fairly broad parameters set by their initial commands.¹³

The armies they commanded were also changing. The core of a Roman army remained its citizen levies until the reign of Augustus, but in terms of equipment, tactics, and support troops it was in constant evolution. City-state warfare in the classical Mediterranean had been conducted between bodies of heavy armed spearmen, formed up in the formation called a *phalanx* and supported by small numbers of missile troops and lightly armed cavalry. Greeks, Romans, Carthaginians, Etruscans, and Campanians all fielded different versions of this kind of army in the fifth and fourth centuries BC. Armies grew more complex when warfare came to involve populations who fought in other ways, as did Gauls, Samnites, Thracians, Iberians, Numidians, and so on. Not only did the emergent imperial powers have to be able to deal more flexibly with their opponents: they were increasingly able to draw on conquered or allied populations or else hire mercenaries to supplement heavy armed infantry. Carthaginians and Romans alike relied on a wide range of troop types on the battlefield. The Greek armies used by Macedon, Syria, and Egypt were also supported by cavalry, light infantry, and missile troops, in their case supporting a phalanx that employed very long pikes. Between the fourth and second centuries BC, the core of the Roman army was transformed from a phalanx of spearmen to a body of heavily armed troops equipped with heavy javelins and swords. A variety of smaller tactical units were developed, in particular the maniples of around 120 men and the cohort of around 400. The flexibility allowed by these systems and weapons gave Roman armies some advantages over both the phalanx of Greek armies (as happened at Cynoscephalae) and less

well-equipped opponents like the Gauls.

Empire's Rewards and the Cost of Empire

Meanwhile the economics of hegemony became more complex. Apart from booty and initial confiscation of land, Rome regularly extracted only levies of manpower from her defeated Italian enemies. Carthage and the kings could be made to pay indemnities extended over decades to provide the Roman state with a regular income. That income was largely spent funding grandiose building in the capital.¹⁴ Building works were contracted out by the censors to Roman citizens, who in this way shared in the proceeds of empire. Polybius was struck by the scale of this operation.

The people are subordinated to the Senate and must defer to them both collectively and also as private individuals. For a very great number of public contracts are issued by the censors for the construction and repair of public works all over Italy. It would not be easy to enumerate them all: and there are also contracts for the management of rivers, of ports, of orchards, of mines and land: in short, all those things that are in the power of the Roman state. The general populace is involved in all these affairs, so much so that one might almost say that everyone has an interest in these contracts and projects. For there are some who bid before the censors in the forum to have the contracts for themselves; others go into partnership with them; some stand surety for the sums involved; while yet others pledge their own wealth to the state for them.¹⁵

From the 180s we begin to hear of great construction projects around the forum, spending on the harbours of Rome, and on roads and colonies. During his censorship Cato the Elder commissioned a vast covered hall for indoor meetings, known grandiosely as the Basilica Porcia after the Royal Stoa (the Stoa Basilike given to Athens by the King of Pergamum). It was funded not from booty or private wealth, but from public revenues. The final defeat of Macedon resulted in a permanent exemption for Roman citizens from direct taxation. From the 160s on the Roman people were, in this sense at least, all beneficiaries of empire. The destruction of Carthage was followed almost immediately by the construction of the magnificent aqueduct known as the Aqua Marcia. Less welcome was the effective end to colonial settlement, a practical consequence of the conquest of Italy linked to a less rational refusal to settle Romans beyond the peninsula. Spending in Rome and the end of colonization helped swell the size of the capital, and so the demand for public works. Rome was now locked into a cycle of urban growth as well as one of imperial expansion.

Indemnities were extracted from rich and complex societies whose economies had been left intact. Like booty, the proceeds were spent

mostly in Italy. The needs of armies in the new overseas territories had to be supplied by other means. The cities of Sicily had paid an annual tithe to Syracuse, and Rome appropriated this. Spanish tribes supplied their occupiers first with grain, and then with cash tribute. Roman power over Spain also allowed them to license exploitation of the silver mines around Cartagena (New Carthage), the former Punic capital.¹⁶ These origins of a provincial tax system do not seem to follow a grand plan. It was often left to Roman conquerors and generals to devise systems that worked locally, and these were often based on pre-Roman precedents. Fragments of the fiscal systems of Hiero of Syracuse and of the kings of Pergamum survived long into the imperial taxation systems. Wherever locals did not undertake the relevant collection or exploitation themselves, contracts were once again issued to Roman citizens. The attractions of running an empire through public contracts are obvious: the state did not need to create a colonial administration, what risks there might be were borne by private individuals, and a wide circle benefited from the proceeds of victory. Polybius added that their dependence on the Senate and the censors kept those who wanted contracts subservient. But the downsides to public contracting are only too well known today. Contractors took the short-term view, and were prepared to exploit provincial subjects without mercy while they held the contract. The Roman term for a contractor, *publicanus*, is regularly paired with 'sinners' in the Gospels.

Rome's struggles with other Mediterranean hegemonic powers also changed the politics of warfare. Alongside the increased scale of conflict, there appear voices of restraint. Real differences seem to have emerged both in the Senate and the assembly about the advisability of particular wars. The war against Philip V of Macedon was almost headed off in the assembly. Cato the Elder had to badger the Senate for years to finish off Carthage. The destruction of Carthage and Corinth clearly appalled some Romans. One reason Rome's eastern allies found it difficult to second-guess Roman policy in their region during the second century was that it genuinely was unpredictable. There was a marked resistance to acquiring territory east of the Adriatic, even after Rome had more or less had to create a province in Macedonia in the 140s. When, in 133, Attalus III of Pergamum died leaving his kingdom to Rome, the legacy was only accepted when Tiberius Gracchus took it to the popular assembly and promised that the proceeds would be used to fund renewed land distributions within Italy.

Not all the wars of the late third and early second century were conflicts between great powers. Roman armies fought in Spain and north Italy for much of the period, ventured into the Gallic interior,

were drawn into, or provoked, secondary wars in the Balkans and Asia Minor. Generally these wars were less controversial, but occasionally senators complained about wars fought, with no formal authority, against distant peoples; attempts were made to deny triumphs to some of these generals. Generals might well respond that the Senate did not understand the situation on the ground, and some pointed to the proceeds of their victories. Competitive building enriched the monumental fabric of Rome, triumphal festivals, historical dramas, and epics all involved the people in the imperial project. Occasionally, commissions of senators were dispatched to regularize post-campaign settlements, or to inspect colonies. Embassies visited Rome from all sides. It is a sinister sign that in 149 BC a law court was set up to deal with accusations of corruption by representatives of the Roman state abroad. The leadership of allies under arms had mutated into a different form of imperial rule.

Comprehending Empire

Looking at Roman expansion in terms of the comparative advantages of its institutions makes good sense to us, as it did to the Greek Polybius. Like him, we are heirs to a style of political analysis that goes back to Aristotle. But it is worth asking how the Romans comprehended this extraordinary story. A rich example is provided by one family that did more than most to lead Rome over these centuries.

The Cornelii were one of the largest of the clans out of which the Republican aristocracy, or rather its inner circle, was comprised. The Cornelii Scipiones comprised one section of the clan. The family is well known from historical writing and would be famous even if their rock-cut tomb had not been found beside the Appian Way leading out of Rome and excavated in the late eighteenth century. The tomb contains nine sarcophagi—there would once have been many more—each with an epitaph. As it happens these fill out parts of the family tree least well known from the narratives of Polybius and Livy. The family was of patrician status, which Romans sometimes understood to mean descendants of the aristocracy of the Regal Period. By the third century patrician families no longer monopolized high political office or the great priesthoods, but they were certainly over-represented in them.

The eldest of those whose epitaphs were found in the tomb, Scipio Barbatus, was consul in 298 BC, his two sons were consuls in 260 and 258, and one held a rare second consulship in 254. The next generation held consulships in 222, 221, and 218 and their children in 205, 191, 190, and 176. The consul of 205 was the victor of Zama, the

battle that had ended the second Punic war. He took the name Scipio Africanus and held a second consulship in 194. Through his influence his brother was consul in 190 and led the war against Antiochus, for which he took the title Asiaticus. These continental nicknames accurately express the scale of their reputations, or egos.

Livy tells the story of how, late in life, Africanus was tried before the people for corruption. On the second day of the trial he was summoned before the tribunes. He approached them where they were seated on the Rostra at one end of the Roman forum, accompanied by a great crowd of his friends and clients. Silence fell, and he addressed them

On this very day, tribunes of the people and you too my fellow citizens, I fought a battle against Hannibal and the Carthaginians, with good fortune and with success. So, since it seems reasonable that all cases and procedures be suspended for today, I am going at once from here up onto the Capitol to praise Jupiter the Greatest and Best, to Juno, to Minerva and to the other gods who preside on the Capitol and the Citadel. And I will thank them that on this very day, and on other occasions, they gave me the strength and wisdom to do great service to the state. Citizens, those of you who are able, come with me and pray to the gods that you may always have leaders like myself. For from time when I was seventeen years old right up to my old age you have always given me honours appropriate to men older than myself, and I have always anticipated your honours by my deeds.¹⁷



Fig 5. The sarcophagus of Scipio Barbatus, Museo Pio-Clementino, Vatican

The court rose, the story goes, and followed him in a tour of the temples of the city. Maybe it is a fiction, and Africanus seems to have lived his last years in a voluntary exile in Liternum on the Bay of Naples, so perhaps he did not get off scot free. But the anecdote tells us how he was remembered.

The next generation of the Scipiones was not so distinguished,

although one was consul as late as 138. But the name was unstoppable. By adopting the son of another great family, the Aemilii Pauli one of whom had destroyed the Macedonian kingdom in 168, the family recruited Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus: he served as consul in 147 and commanded the force that finally destroyed Carthage once and for all, a second Africanus. As a statesman and a patron of the arts, he was idealized by Cicero as guiding the state during the years before civil war became endemic.

Family traditions are created by remembering, and memory is always selective. The epitaphs in the tomb were particularly susceptible to this process, but for what it is worth the image that emerges is a consistent one.¹⁸ Each of the Scipiones is praised for personal qualities—often beauty as well as virtue—and some at least of their offices are listed, but the great field of achievement is war. Barbatus won wars against Etruscans and Samnites and subdued all of Lucania in the south of the peninsula. As well as the consulship he was elected censor and held the most prestigious priesthood in Rome, the position of *pontifex maximus*. His son, the consul of 259, also made censor. His victories were naval ones, conquering almost all of Corsica from the Carthaginians. On his return he set up a temple to the goddesses of the storms. His brother triumphed in 253 after capturing the city of Panormus in Sicily. And on and on. The consul of 222 led the conquest of Milan and the Gallic tribe of the Insubres whose capital it was. His son was selected in 204 as the noblest Roman citizen and so the best suited to welcome the arrival of the Great Mother Goddess from Asia Minor when her cult statue was brought to Rome. He too had his victories over the Gauls. Successive victories were won further and further afield, the honours expressed in the same words generation after generation. From our perspective, we see the profound structural changes Rome underwent as it moved from an aggressive Italian city-state to ruler of the Mediterranean. But for the Corneli Scipiones—and doubtless too for the Fabii Maximi, the Sempronii Gracchi, and all those other great families that rivalled them, married into them, and told the same story of Rome with only slightly different inflections—their family history formed part, a leading part, of a narrative of conquest that lasted for centuries.

Further Reading

William Harris's *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome* (Oxford, 1979) changed the way Roman imperialism is discussed, moving attention from Roman justifications for wars to the political, social, and ideological factors driving expansion. The Roman takeover of the Greek east is chronicled in Erich Gruen's *Hellenistic World and the*

Coming of Rome (Berkeley, 1984). Arthur Eckstein's *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War and the Rise of Rome* (Berkeley, 2006) offers an interpretation based on political science. Graham Shipley's *The Greek World after Alexander* (London, 2000) is a marvellous guide to the world that Rome destroyed. John Richardson discusses Rome's less glamorous, but enormously significant, first experiments in imperialism in the west in *Hispaniae* (Cambridge, 1986).

Modern debates over the domestic consequences of Roman overseas expansion begin from Peter Brunt's *Italian Manpower* (Oxford, 1971). The first chapters of Keith Hopkins's *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge, 1978) present a lucid argument relating imperialism to the growth of slavery and the expansion of the city of Rome. But the demography has recently come under renewed scrutiny. Excellent starting points for this debate are Nathan Rosenstein's *Rome at War* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2004) and a collection of papers edited by Luuk de Ligt and Simon Northwood under the title *People, Land and Politics* (Leiden, 2008).

VI SLAVERY AND EMPIRE

Aiming to reconcile a population that was scattered and primitive—so quick to take up arms—to a peaceful and leisured existence by providing luxurious amenities, he gave private encouragement and public assistance to them to build temples, market places and urban mansions, praising those who were quick to do so, and criticizing those who were slow. This way a competition for honour took the place of compulsion. He provided the sons of the chiefs with a proper education, and he praised the natural aptitude of the Britons over the hard work of the Gauls, so those who had refused to learn Latin, began to acquire oratorical skills. Even our national style of dress became popular; the toga was often to be seen. And little by little they were led towards those things that encourage vice, colonnades, bathing and elegant banquets. In their inexperience they took all this for civilization; in fact it was part of their enslavement.

(Tacitus, *Agricola* 21)

A Patrimonial Empire

Every empire bears the mark of the kind of society that creates it. Nomad empires like that of the Mongols ruled through tribes and clans. The British Empire began as a trading venture, was conquered and governed by members of the aristocracy, and was administered by a colonial bureaucracy staffed from the professional middle-classes.¹ Each of these social groups left its mark on the empire. Republican Rome was a city-state run by its greatest families. It was also a slave-owning society. It is no surprise that the empire it created was aristocratic, and that it depended for its management on the family and on slavery.

Family and slavery might seem an odd combination today. But in many pre-modern societies the two were fitted closely together.² Many economic and governmental functions that are in the modern world organized by corporations, companies, and bureaucracies of various kinds were in the past mostly managed by individuals, who

relied for help on networks of families and friends, 'kith and kin'. Perhaps the most basic economic activity in antiquity is farming, whether that of tribal cultivators who organizing their work through ideologies of kinship, or that of peasant families. Slavery appeared in both kinds of society as a means of supplementing the workforce. Typically it appeared alongside friendship and clientage: slaves provided labour all the year round, others might help for particular needs. The aristocratic rulers of mid-Republican Rome had much more to organize than their family estates. Some owned several farms, others buildings in the city, trading vessels, potteries, and small shops. No one had enough relatives to staff or manage all these ventures. Wage labour existed, but it was rarely used, and mostly for piecework. Military aggression made the growth of slavery possible, and the more complex society that resulted from expansion generated new roles that slaves could fill. Roman property owners—and slaves were property of course—made use of slavery in every possible capacity. Slaves worked in the fields and the mines, served at table and in the bedroom, were teachers, financial managers, and *confidants*. Romans famously freed many of their slaves and gave them a limited form of citizenship. The reason was not sentimental: the slaves who were freed were generally the most skilled, and as ex-slaves or freedmen they remained closely tied to the houses of their former masters. By the end of the Republic a great part of the city consisted of grand houses, each of which might include hundreds of slaves, and around them a penumbra of former slaves still closely tied to their former masters. Most Roman aristocrats spent only a small part of their lives in public service, as generals or governors or other officials: while on service their family, friends, and former slaves assisted them. The state owned a few slaves, but—until the emperors expanded their own family and slave household to form the kernel of a civil service—the empire was governed patrimonially, than is by the kith, kin, and slaves of its leading members.

The family also generated powerful images of authority, images which were easily transferred to other spheres. The ideological focus was the *paterfamilias*, the normal head of the household. Roman fathers were imagined to exercise benevolent care and moral leadership as well as authority. Formally, the Roman *paterfamilias* owned all the property of those persons under his authority, a group that included his adult children, the children of his sons, their slaves and ex-slaves. He also exercised a kind of guardianship over his female relatives, and even his married daughters remained under his authority. The *paterfamilias* was magistrate and priest in his own household, representing it to the state and to the gods. He presided over the family cult, might convene a council of his friends to help him decide on family matters, and might turn this into a family court

to try members of the household: until Augustus even adultery was a matter for the jurisdiction of the head of the household. Slaves might be subjected to beatings at his command, or set free: ex-slaves might in principle be re-enslaved. Recent research on the Roman family has shown that reality was more complex. For a start, the idea of most adult males being completely under the thumb of an aged *paterfamilias* has to be rejected for all periods of Roman history. In a world where men typically did not marry for the first time until their late twenties and where life expectancy was at pre-modern levels, many adult Romans will have had no living parents. Those old men who did survive were treated with enormous respect: the situation was closer to traditional Japanese and Chinese society than to that of western Europe today. Tales of antique severity were part of a general tendency of Roman writers to evoke a morally stable past when attacking individuals in the present. Yet this myth made the Pater an excellent figure with which to represent benevolent authority in other contexts. Senators were formally addressed as *patres conscripti*. The title *pater patriae* (father of the fatherland) was given to Cicero, to Caesar, and then to Augustus after whom it became a standard component of imperial titlature.

Beyond the family extended webs of patronage, that complex of relationships that connected powerful Romans to their freeborn clients of various kinds. Patronage meant exchanges of favours and respect between people of different status or standing.³ It included the senior senator offering support to a younger one, the landowner helping out a poorer neighbour, and the backing provided by a patron of the arts for poets: it faded out into the social dimensions of the legally enforceable dependence of ex-slaves, tenants, and debtors. The powerful could offer their social subordinates allowances, loans of capital, or positions as managers of businesses and the occasional meal. Relationships of this kind were in principle inheritable, and some lesser families probably did remain in the orbit of larger ones for a few generations. The returns might be financial or presented as political support—although it was impolite to mention it—and urban clients also provided an entourage on formal occasions. To their grander friends—younger senators on the make, *equestrians*, and members of municipal aristocracies—the powerful could make connections, and perhaps obtain for them through their brokerage magistracies, priesthoods, social promotions, and the like. Friends also felt an obligation to help the widows and orphaned children of their connections. Orators offered free representation in the courts for their greater and lesser friends, and *literati* read and listened to each other's compositions. For these services, the return was gratitude, and the reputation of a man who honoured his social obligations, his *officia*.

Patronage offered many models and metaphors for imperial rule. Provincial communities who wished to prosecute governors for corruption needed to first find a senator who would represent them as *patronus*: some were honoured for the service by Greek cities.⁴ Roman generals on occasion became the protectors of foreign communities, first in Italy and then overseas.⁵ Some bonds endured for a surprisingly long time. When Cicero was consul, in 63 BC, a group of conspirators tried to get the support of the Gallic Allobroges: they were not persuaded and exposed the plot, but did so by approaching Cicero through a minor senator named Fabius Sanga, whose ancestor had originally defeated them in the 120s. The language of patronage could be applied to relations between entire peoples and the Roman state as a whole. During the late Republic various foreign peoples and kings were formally hailed as ‘friends and allies’ of the Roman people.⁶ No one in Rome would have understood this as a relationship between equals. All the same the relationship carried a real sense of mutual obligations. When Rome was divided against itself, these relationships might draw in foreigners. Sallust opens his account of the war against the Numidian prince Jugurtha with Scipio Aemilianus advising his young ally to seek the friendship of the Roman people as a whole, not of individual Romans.⁷ The civil wars of the 40s and 30s BC were fought mainly outside Italy, and involved tribes and kings from all around the empire: Cleopatra in Egypt, Herod in Judaea, Juba of Mauretania were among those trying to guess future winners in Roman politics. That problem only resolved itself with the end of political pluralism. The emperor became the ultimate source of all benefits, senatorial patrons increasingly acted as brokers connecting their clients to imperial largess, and Augustus boasted in his autobiography how distant German tribes had sent envoys seeking his friendship and that of the Roman people.⁸

Slavery and the Roman Economy

Slavery and the family acquired more and more functions as Roman power expanded over the last centuries BC. Nowhere is this clearer than in the management of the public and private proceeds of empire.

Perhaps most original was the development of legal devices to enable these institutions to be used more effectively to manage economic activity.⁹ A good example is provided by the *peculium*, an amount of property that an individual might use, despite the fact that the ultimate owner was the head of the household. Families needed all their adult members to be able to operate as effective economic agents: a *peculium* allowed a son to run a farm, or to buy and sell goods without constant reference to his father. By allowing some

slaves a *peculium* they could act as commercial agents and farm managers or could run shops or tenements. It became common for some slaves to retain money they earned with the intention of eventually buying their freedom from their owners: the sum would allow the master to replace the slave, and he retained the services of a freedman. Augustus allowed soldiers a *peculium*, a practical measure given some would spend decades at a great distance from their fathers. From the early second century BC, a law of agency, the *lex institoria*, supplemented these arrangements. Roman property owners were able to appoint free, freed, or even slave agents (*institores*) who could enter into contracts and incur liabilities on their behalf. Something of this kind was vital once some Romans had business interests and estates in several provinces, or might be engaged in long-distance trade or contracts to provision distant Roman armies. Yet another example, also from the early second century, is the development of partnerships (*societates*), originally a device to allow heirs to manage an inheritance jointly, but now adapted to allow a number of parties to pool their assets and share the profits and losses of common enterprises. This was especially useful as the potential scale of economic activities increased: the Elder Cato is said to have joined in a partnership of fifty to fund a commercial voyage.¹⁰ The greatest public contracts of the late Republic—the collection of five years of public revenues from the province of Asia is the most famous example—demanded huge financial guarantees. Partnership was vital to enterprises of this sort. Other empires faced similar problems but dealt with them in different ways. Early modern Europe developed the joint-stock company as a means of pooling capital and risk. Rome strengthened and employed the institutions of the family and slavery.

The economic sphere in which we can best track change is agriculture. It is not clear how early some Romans started to acquire multiple properties up and down the peninsula: for the fourth and third centuries there is much more evidence of colonial and other settlement. Archaeological evidence for villa building and an increased concern with surplus production is scarce in many parts of Italy before the late second century BC. Literary accounts of tranquil rural retreats begin even later. But around 160 BC, Cato the Elder wrote a treatise *On Farming*, which borrowed from earlier Greek manuals on farming, yet was adapted to Roman needs. It includes, for example, lists of the Italian towns in which the best items of various kinds of equipment can be purchased. At its heart is a thoroughly Roman model of slavery. Cato's prescriptions suit a moderate-sized farm practising a mixed agriculture based on the most common Italian crops. It produced a little of everything to supply the needs of the servile workforce, the farm manager, and the owner, but was also

designed to produce a surplus for the market.

The market for agricultural produce was a growing one in the second century BC. Powering this was urbanization. The city of Rome probably already had more than 100,000 inhabitants. It was expanding rapidly as a result of the public spending organized by the censors, and perhaps too because colonization had stopped at the end of the 170s. After the destruction of Corinth in 146 BC it had also become the central commercial hub of the western Mediterranean. As the proportion of the population who did not live on the land grew, so did the demand for foodstuffs. Importing from a distance was expensive and risky: Rome would resort to this eventually, as the city approached a million souls in the reign of Augustus. But for now there was a simpler solution. The confiscation of land from disloyal allies after the Hannibalic war had increased the amount of public property, and wars of overseas conquest had enriched some at least of the landowning classes. Some of this wealth they used to purchase farms, some of it to invest in them. Slaves, in the period of overseas expansion, offered a cheap workforce. Capital-intensive agriculture became a way that short-term windfalls of booty could be transformed into ventures that would make money in the long term. That was the logic to which Cato responded. There was, in fact, a widespread and consistent interest in ways of improving the value of farmland. Varro produced a longer treatise on agriculture in the early 30s BC, and by the time Columella and Pliny were writing in the later first century AD they could evidently draw on a library of agronomical works. At the heart of all of them was slave labour.¹¹

Cato wrote for landowners who were planting vineyards, equipping their farms with mills and presses, building storage facilities, purchasing iron farming equipment and, to use it, slaves. The farm he envisaged was run by a manager with a permanent staff of a couple of dozen slaves, supplemented when needed, as for the vintage, by the casual labour of free peasants or townsfolk.¹² Slaves offered a core workforce that could be worked exceptionally hard, the sick and old could be easily disposed of, no idle mouths need be tolerated, and the workforce could be increased or decreased in size easily enough. Slaves were not subject to military levies. Cato's recommendations have horrified many for the banality of their cruelty. The production of grain and wine were the key market-oriented enterprises. Landowners also exploited non-agricultural resources on their estates, such as clay-pits and woodland. Clay-pits were vital for making the pottery container *amphorae* in which wine and oil were exported and the vats called *dolia* used for storage. The city of Rome was greedy for bricks and tiles. Some properties could supply timber and firewood. Farms close to Rome developed irrigated

fruit and vegetable gardening, the raising of fowl, bee keeping, and even the cultivation of game of various kinds.¹³ Property owners also invested in transport infrastructure, they built markets for fresh produce, and rented out shops to their clients along the frontages of their homes. At all stages of this economic growth the propertied classes led the way. No new commercial classes emerged, as the capital came from the social elites and they entrusted the management of these enterprises to their clients, freed-men, and slaves.¹⁴

Roman landowners needed farm bailiffs, building managers, shopkeepers, and supervisors of small workshops, trusted representatives to collect rent from urban and rural tenants, to conduct business in distant ports, and to manage the complex bookkeeping on each estate and of the household as a whole. Those who dealt with contracts or had to report or else receive written instructions had to be literate. Landowners depended on numerate individuals to manage what must have been complex flows of cash, to record and chase arrears, and to check the returns on loans. They used slave and ex-slave secretaries, some of whom travelled with them wherever they went, assisting in their official business as well as their private affairs. Slaves and freedmen provided for all this.¹⁵

Why slaves? Roman society had no equivalent of the educated but relatively poor urban classes who supplied Victorian entrepreneurs with their waged clerical assistants. The citizen army produced no retired officers with the kind of generalized administrative experience depended on today in many sectors of business and government. Nor did the freeborn have access to anything like the social and commercial institutions that today allow those with talent and energy to develop career paths to positions of increasing responsibility. Slaves, on the other hand, were malleable. Some were highly educated, indeed most Roman education took place within aristocratic households. Owned for long periods they could be trained and disciplined to suit their masters' needs. Most slaves were completely detached from the societies in which they had grown up, or else they were 'home-bred': neither group had any real hope of achieving better conditions except with their owners' support. Besides, slaves were utterly dependent on their masters.¹⁶ The sanctions for disobedience or dishonesty were horrifying. It was in principle illegal to kill a slave, deliberately at least, although who would bring a case against a master? But slaves might be routinely confined, beaten, even tortured, and there were many lesser sanctions. Cato recommended access to slave women be used as an incentive. Some slaves were allowed to start families, but their partner and children could be sold at a master's whim. Slaves might hope for softer jobs and their eventual freedom, but they could be reassigned to hard labour if the master

preferred. Was there a connection too between the Romans' increasingly autocratic treatment of the enemies and their habitual command over their slaves? It is difficult to test such a thesis, but reading Cato on his slaves it is difficult to forget him ending every public speech he made at the end of his life with the words *Delenda est Carthago*, 'and Carthage must be destroyed'.

Cato's ideal farm would have looked tiny to later generations. Purpose-built villas with slave quarters appear in the last century BC, often equipped with luxurious residential quarters. A great mansion excavated at Settefinestre in Tuscany provides a vivid model. An entire urban mansion, secluded garden included, has been transplanted into the countryside and bolted onto a working farm. When the master was present, he would arrive with servile attendants to look after his every need and desire. Meanwhile a very different category of slaves worked his vineyards, his fields, his mills, and his potteries. Most agricultural slaves were not made to work in chains—hardly practical in most circumstances—but many were branded or wore collars. Even worse were the conditions of the slaves that worked in the mines. And Apuleius, in his novel the *Golden Ass*, provides a horrific description of a grain-mill where slaves ground grain by turning a horizontally mounted wheel in unbearable heat.



Fig 6. A slave collar (original in the Museo Nazionale Romano, Terme di Diocleziano in Rome)

O gods above, what poor subhuman creatures were there, their bodies bruised all with livid marks, their back scarred from beatings, covered rather than clothed, in rags, some just wearing a loincloths to preserve their dignity, all of them so practically naked. Some had been branded on the forehead, some had their hair shaved off and some wore shackles. They looked ghastly, and in fact they could hardly see as their eyes were dimmed with muck and smoke in the foul smelling darkness of that place.¹⁷

Meanwhile the lavish servile households of the super-rich kept growing. Slave teachers and barbers took their place alongside concubines and all kinds of chefs, doormen and dressers, bakers and wet-nurses, poetry readers, gardeners, and physical trainers. Literally hundreds of occupational designations are known from the elaborate graves their masters often provided for them. Extraordinarily complex societies arose within single households, societies marked by subtle hierarchies and minute differentiations of role and title. Slaves were so ubiquitous they often seem invisible. It is easy to forget that a free man or woman of any status was almost never alone, and never needed to exert themselves, because there was always another pair of hands to do it for them.

Slaves, Citizens, and Soldiers

Slaves, to begin with, were luxuries. When we can tell—rarely—how much a slave cost, the price in today's terms is about that of a new car. Only the rich needed or could afford such skilled servants, to supplement their clients and tenants and dependent relatives. Yet Cato's farm employed less skilled slaves. How did Rome become a society based on mass slavery? And how did this change relate to Roman imperialism?

Part of this story has been told already. During the second century BC there are many signs that slavery was becoming more and more important in the Roman economy. Cato's description is an early piece of evidence. Anecdotes begin to pile up. At the end of the second century BC, Nicomedes, King of Bithynia, refused to send troops to fight alongside Rome on the grounds that so many of his subjects had been captured by slave traders. Nearer to home there were two major slave rebellions in Sicily in the late second century (135–132 and 104–100), while the Spartacus war of 73 BC took two Roman armies to suppress. If the growth of agricultural slavery can be matched to the development of wine production for export, then the pace of the transformation through the late second and early first centuries BC can be measured by a wide range of archaeological criteria from the number of container amphorae found from each period, to the growing number of wrecked cargo vessels that have been located by divers along the Mediterranean coasts.¹⁸

The growth of Roman slavery was so rapid that it was one of the very few social transformations actually noticed by ancient writers. The geographer Strabo explained how one part of southern Asia Minor, Cilicia, became a major centre for piracy.¹⁹ It began with a local rebellion against the kings of Syria. The rebels then began to raid

Syria for slaves, because they discovered the slave market on Delos could handle a turnover of 10,000 slaves a day. The reason, says Strabo, was that after the defeat of Carthage and Corinth in 146 BC the Romans had become rich and started to use great numbers of slaves. Other powers in the area—the city of Rhodes, the kings of Cyprus and of Egypt—were either enemies of Syria, or for other reasons did not interfere, and the Romans were not concerned with matters beyond the Taurus. Strabo got it right—more or less—but even he did not appreciate the full combination of factors that had turned the eastern Mediterranean into a playground for pirates and slave traders. Roman expansion was the root cause of most of them. First, it was Rome's wars against the kings that had left the eastern Mediterranean unpoliced. Rome would not even begin to try to suppress piracy until the very end of the second century BC. It remained a menace until Pompey swept the inland sea from end to end in the 60s, and Augustus created the first permanent Roman fleets.²⁰ Second, Romans had indeed begun to gear their economy to slave labour, but not just because of their wealth and not just after 146 BC. Cheap slaves first become available during Rome's Balkan wars in the first decades of the second century. One notorious agreement made between Romans and their then allies the Aetolians promised the latter any cities and territory captured, so long as Rome could take the movable booty and the population.²¹ Prisoners of war were from that point on a major component of booty from most major campaigns.

Not all agricultural slaves were used on villas like those described by Cato. Accounts of the Sicilian Slave Wars also mention slave shepherds on the great ranches of the south. But the great demand was to staff the new-style villas, and Roman warfare was not quite regular enough to ensure a steady supply of captives. Many fewer legions were fielded during the 160s, for example, than in the 190s when Rome faced both Macedon and Syria, or in the years leading to the fall of Corinth and Carthage. This is where Delos came in. When there were no captives available, Rome turned to slave traders, who supplied themselves from piracy and raiding in the chaotic conditions left by Rome's ventures in the eastern Mediterranean.²² At other times there were fresh consignments of war captives. Traders followed the armies, buying captives from individual soldiers. Others began to exploit new populations in northern Europe: there is some sign that—just as in Africa in the early modern period—some tribes took to raiding their neighbours for slaves which they could exchange for imported goods, goods that in antiquity included Mediterranean wine. As long as Rome had the appetite for slaves there would be no end to the trade in one form or another.

Why were Roman landowners so committed to slave labour? The

population of Italy was not small; indeed it had probably never been so high as under Roman rule. Until the early second century most of the agricultural workforce was supplied by peasants, some owning their own land, others tenants on state land or on farms belonging to others, a few working for cash, and probably many families doing a little of all these things. Arguments have raged since antiquity over how far and how fast free peasants were displaced by slaves, and they continue today.²³ Changes certainly took place, and they seem to have unfolded gradually. Peasant freeholders, sharecroppers, and tenants are well attested in the Principate. Citizen death rates on campaign were never catastrophic. Regional differences are clearer than ever in the archaeological data. Yet agricultural slavery and intensive agriculture did expand, and many of the soldiers who fought in the armies of the late Republic were landless. One way or another the ancient link between soldier-citizen and citizen-farmer had been broken, and Roman Italy had become a slave society.

Further Reading

One of the great achievements of the last generation of research has been a realization of the centrality of the family to all aspects of Roman society. Beryl Rawson's collection *The Family in Ancient Rome* (London, 1986) is an excellent starting point, including papers by most of the major scholars in the field. Paul Weaver's *Familia Caesaris* (Cambridge, 1972) revealed the use the emperors made of slaves in governing the empire. Rawson and Weaver together edited a follow-up volume entitled *The Roman Family in Italy* (Oxford, 1997). Richard Saller's *Patriarchy, Property and Death in the Roman Family* (Cambridge, 1994) harnessed demography and social science to show the gap between myth and reality when it came to the power of the *paterfamilias*.

The best starting points for finding out more about Roman slavery are the first volume of *The Cambridge History of World Slavery* (Cambridge, 2011) edited by Paul Cartledge and Keith Bradley, and Bradley's *Slavery and Society at Rome* (Cambridge, 1994). For the relationship between the growth of a slave society in Rome and Roman imperialism, see the books by Hopkins and Rosenstein noted in the Further Reading for [Chapter 5](#). The great debate over the significance of slavery in the Roman economy has been conducted mostly in Italian. Dominic Rathbone's article 'The Slave Mode of Production in Italy', published in the *Journal of Roman Studies* in 1983, provides a sympathetic overview. Ulrike Roth's *Thinking Tools* (London, 2007) offers an important challenge to the orthodoxy. Jean-Jacques Aubert's *Business Managers in Ancient Rome* (Leiden, 1994)

shows brilliantly how Romans adapted traditional institutions to cope with the demands of an ever more complex society.

KEY DATES IN CHAPTER VII

~~846bc~~ Carthage and Corinth sacked by Roman armies

~~838-129bc~~ Roman control of the kingdom of Pergamum, creating the province of Asia and making client kings out of the rulers of Bithynia, Pontus, Cappadocia

~~183bc~~ Death of Tiberius Gracchus marks the beginning of *popularis* politics in Rome

~~125-122bc~~ Roman campaign in the Rhône Valley

~~123bc~~ Death of Gaius Gracchus marks an acceleration of urban violence in Rome

~~120bc~~ Mithridates VI succeeds to the throne of Pontus

~~112-104bc~~ Roman war in North Africa against Jugurtha of Numidia

~~105-101bc~~ Roman wars against the Cimbri and Teutones in Gaul, Spain, and north Italy. Marius held an unprecedented six consulships in this period

~~103-100bc~~ Death of Saturninus. Pitched battles in Rome, as tension increased between Senate and people, Senate and equestrians, and Marius and the Senate

~~102bc~~ Marius' campaign against the pirates

~~91-87bc~~ The Social War in Italy. Rome at war with her allies, defeats them, and then grants most Roman citizenship

~~89bc~~ Mithridates invades Asia, orders the killing of around 100,000 Roman and Italian residents, and crosses to Greece where he is welcomed into Athens. All Roman territory east of the Adriatic was now in enemy hands

VII CRISIS

As Scipio watched the city completely destroyed while the flames consumed it he is said to have shed tears and lamented openly for his enemies. After reflecting for a while he considered that all cities and peoples and empires pass away, just as all men have their own fates. Troy had suffered this, although once a prosperous city, and the empires of the Assyrians and the Medes, and that of Persia, the greatest empire of its day, and of Macedon that had just recently been so famous. Whether or not deliberately, he quoted the following lines of the Poet

The day will come when Holy Ilium will
perish
And Priam, and his people, will be slain

And I spoke to him—for I was his teacher—and asked him what he meant. Without any dissimulation, he answered that he was thinking of his own country, for which he feared when he reflected on the fate of all mortal things.

(Polybius, *Histories* 39.5)

The destruction of Corinth and Carthage in 146 BC, following hard on the dismantling of the kingdom of Macedon, and the humiliation of Syria and Egypt, made the Romans masters of the Mediterranean world. Polybius was right about that. Yet within fifty years, they temporarily lost control of all their eastern territory, and nearly lost Italy too in a war against their Italian allies that caught them completely unprepared. Romans were also compelled to fight major wars against new enemies emerging from the interiors of Africa and Spain, Gaul and Germany, and to deal with the growing menace of piracy. Even worse, the crisis of the Republican empire coincided with the onset of internal strife that would lead to multiple political murders and civil wars. Rome survived this bloody century, just. But its civil institutions did not. The assemblies and the Senate lost their power, the courts were first politicized and then marginalized, and the army found a permanent place at the heart of Roman politics. This chapter asks how Rome nearly lost the imperial plot for ever.

The Last Superpower

Polybius' eyewitness account of Scipio weeping to see Carthage burn is a nice anecdote, but it expresses a sense of Rome's historic destiny, not a genuine consciousness of risk. There is no sign that either Roman generals or Greek historians really understood the volatile condition to which the Mediterranean world had been reduced by the middle of the second century BC. The neglect of the seas that had allowed piracy to flourish was just one symptom of a much wider problem. Throughout the middle Republic, Roman armies had demonstrated their capacity to smash rival power blocks. But almost nothing had been put in their place. Rome was still much more of a conquest state—a society whose ideologies, economies, and political institutions were geared to constant expansion—than a tributary empire with stable fiscal, governmental, and security systems. Conquest states are common enough in world history, but most have been short-lived and failed to institutionalize their power. Rome nearly joined them.

At the time (167 BC) when Polybius declared Rome ruler of the inhabited world, its *directly* administered territory consisted of a scatter of colonies and public lands up and down Italy; the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica; and a strip of territory along the Mediterranean coast of Spain. By 146 BC there had been some modest expansion in the Iberian peninsula; otherwise the only additions were a province replacing the former kingdom of Macedon in the central Balkans, and another cut out of the immediate hinterland of Carthage. Rome's *informal* authority extended beyond these territories, but quite how far no one knew for sure. Even within areas that were certainly under Roman hegemony, such as the allied communities in Italy, the Greek cities of the Aegean world, and the minor kingdoms of western Asia Minor and North Africa, it was unclear precisely what level of control Romans wished to exercise. Perhaps Romans themselves had not agreed on this question.

That uncertainty was an unfamiliar feature of international relations in the ancient world. Politically pluralist systems, like the world of the classical Greek city-states or the mosaic of Macedonian kingdoms that succeeded them, had tended to develop common rules of engagement. Rome's first decades in the eastern Mediterranean were marked by attempts to observe some of the diplomatic protocols developed between Graeco-Macedonian kingdoms.¹ A city-state could never deal with kings entirely on an equal footing. Cato the Elder was said to have defined a king as 'a creature that ate flesh': he put it in Greek, so it might not be misunderstood. Offers of crowns to Roman

senators—and reputedly the occasional marriage offer made by a king to an aristocratic Roman woman—caused more tension than help. But Romans learned the slogans and the critical terms of Greek diplomacy, such as the special nuances of terms like *autonomia* (the right to use one's own laws), and they learned Greek.² During the early second century, some senators became quite skilled in the complex diplomatic world of the Greeks, just as some Greeks made themselves experts on Roman habits. But progressively, Rome seemed to depart from the rules, or perhaps to revert to her own. For Greeks, a treaty that concluded a war—like the Peace of Apamea signed with Antiochus III of Syria in 188—recognized the independence of the two parties. The Roman presumption that they could still order around his successors—like Antiochus IV en route to conquer Egypt—must have seemed very odd. Romans, perhaps, were simply treating kings the way they treated Italian allies. Cultural misunderstanding only explains so much, however, given how well some Greeks and Romans knew each other. This sort of treatment was humiliating for kings, and perhaps that was the point. But the behaviour that caused the greatest difficulties was probably not intentional. This was the fact that Rome's interventions in the east were inconsistent and unpredictable. A number of allies increased their power by stages with no reaction from Rome, only to find that some final expansion provoked a savage response. Rhodes had been an ally against Philip V and Antiochus III and gained territory and influence after their defeats, but fell spectacularly from grace in 167. Delos's infamous rise was the result of the Romans deliberately deciding to limit Rhodian naval influence by creating a free port in the middle of the Aegean. I have already described how even Polybius, who knew Roman decision-making better than most, was astonished at the treatment meted out to the Achaean League.

One cause of Roman unpredictability was the volatility of domestic politics. A characteristic of all imperial systems is that disputes in the centre of power—the metropole—have disproportionate ramifications in the imperial peripheries.³ Cities, kings, and tribes around the Mediterranean were now peripheral to Rome. It is too simple to say that the Roman Senate was divided into advocates of expansion and those who opposed it. It seems to have been common ground that the expansion of Roman power, of the rule or majesty of the Roman people, was a good thing. But on specific issues there were disagreements. Some were generated by personal rivalries. The enemies of Fulvius Nobilior and Manlius Vulso claimed that their campaigns against the Ambraciots and the Galatians respectively, both waged in the 180s in the aftermath of the great wars against Macedon and Syria, were opportunistic and unnecessary wars carried out for

personal glory and gain. They were probably right. Other disagreements may have been on more fundamental principles. Cato campaigned for years before persuading the Senate that the city of Carthage, already twice defeated and subjected to crippling terms, should be destroyed. Eventually he won, but the obliteration of an ancient city shocked others besides Scipio. There was a particular reluctance to expand the areas under direct rule, perhaps from apprehension of the new costs and responsibilities that might follow annexation. Many of those reluctant were apparently senators on whom those responsibilities might fall, while some of the advocates of expansion were those who hoped to benefit from the public contracts that new provinces tended to generate. Tension began to rise between the senatorial aristocracy and the equestrian order from which many of the richer contractors, the *publicani*, were drawn.

Pressures for expansion were not always internally generated. For a variety of reasons, most to do with their short-term interest, a number of kings made Rome or the Roman people their heirs.⁴ When Attalus III of Pergamum died in 133, leaving his royal lands and prerogatives to Rome, many senators did not wish to accept the legacy. But the tribune Tiberius Gracchus, desperate for additional revenue to fund his populist programme of land reform, took the issue to the assembly. As a result Rome acquired first a rebellion, and then a province in western Asia Minor. A decade later Rome acquired permanent responsibilities in southern France after a series of wars to protect her ally Marseilles and the land route to Spain. It is not clear whether a province was set up in 125 or a little later. Republican provinces are easier for us to spot when they were created by absorbing a preexisting kingdom like that of Syracuse or Pergamum: in the west it is more a matter of noticing that the presence of pro-magistrates and armies had become regular instead of periodic.

Even when Romans did take overseas territory into direct rule, they were very selective in doing so. The kings of Pergamum had made their name defending Greek cities from Galatian attacks, and became powerful when Rome excluded the Seleucid kings of Syria from Asia Minor. Their kingdom included a number of ancient Greek cities grown rich on the wealth of the fertile river valleys that flow west from the Anatolian plateau into the Aegean, and also some much poorer highland marches, their defensive line against aggressors from the Anatolian interior. These border territories Rome had no interest in, and promptly handed them over to the minor kings to which she was allied. The security consequences should have been predictable. Yet similar decisions were taking place at the other end of the Mediterranean. Rome administered directly what had been the rich agricultural hinterland of Carthage. But the rest of Carthage's African

empire, the defensive hinterlands, was handed over to the lesser kings of the Numidians and the Moors. The policy, in both spheres, was short-sighted. By the end of the second century, some of Rome's fiercest enemies were to be drawn from the petty monarchs that she had strengthened in Asia and Africa. The parallels with recent events are depressingly obvious: Manuel Noriega in Panama, the Taliban in Afghanistan, and Saddam Hussein in Iraq all began their rise to power as allies of the West.

The career of Jugurtha, King of Numidia, provides a case in point. The Numidians were a federation of peoples living south and west of Carthage's territory. On the destruction of Carthage in 146 BC these allies were not just given territory and booty, but as Roman allies were also expected to provide troops for Roman wars. Jugurtha enters history in 133 BC as a leader of an allied Numidian detachment supporting Scipio Aemilianus' eight-month-long siege of the Celtiberian fortress of Numantia in northern Spain. The Roman historian Sallust tells the story of how, immediately after the victory, Scipio took Jugurtha aside, praised his ability, but then advised him to cultivate the friendship of the Roman people as a whole, not of individual Romans. Jugurtha proceeded to do the opposite. The lack of political consensus in Rome meant that it was always possible for him to find some supporters among the Senate, and as he murdered and intrigued his way into a more and more powerful position at home, he protected himself from the complaints to the Senate by bribing prominent figures. Sallust puts into Jugurtha's mouth the famous description of Rome as 'A city for sale and ready for destruction just as soon as it finds a buyer'.⁵

By 118 Jugurtha had murdered one heir to the throne and was at war with another, in 112 he ignored a senatorially mediated partition of the kingdom and two Roman embassies, killed his brother (massacring a group of Italian merchants in the final siege of Cirta), and survived both a Roman invasion and a summons to Rome. Eventually Rome could ignore the situation no longer: a half-hearted war was fought by a succession of senatorial generals until the arrival of Gaius Marius. Jugurtha's capture in 107 and execution in 104 marked the end of a very long defiance of Rome.

Others watched and learned. Mithridates V of Pontus was one of those minor kings of Asia Minor whose power grew in the power vacuum created by Rome's defeat of Seleucid Syria. Anatolia had been within the sphere of influence of the Seleucid monarchs, even if not always very firmly under their control, until Rome's defeat of Antiochus III first at Thermopylae in Greece and then at Magnesia in what is now western Turkey. The Treaty of Apamea signed in 188 BC effectively excluded the Seleucids from any further involvement in

Asia Minor. A series of minor kingdoms grew up, some looking more Macedonian in style, some more Persian, all revolving around Rome. Pontus, which stretched along the southern coast of the Black Sea, formed its own hybrid identity, combining Greek titles with Iranian dynastic names. The King of Pontus too sent troops to help Rome against Carthage. When Attalus III of Pergamum, the most important of the Anatolian kingdoms, left his royal lands and prerogatives to Rome in 133, Pontic troops were among the allies helping Rome claim her inheritance, and the king was rewarded with some of the territory Rome did not want. Like Jugurtha, Mithridates V also exploited Roman friendship to expand his power at the expense of his rivals, in particular the kings of Cappadocia. On his death in 120 BC his son, Mithridates VI, used this territory as the basis for an empire that included much of the Black Sea coast and more territory in Anatolia. Soon he too was a threat to Rome's interests, ignoring diplomatic warnings and gradually accumulating power. But the Romans were unable to confront him, for by then their hegemony was under threat from other directions.



Fig 7. Mithridates VI Eupator King of Pontus portrayed as Hercules

The Limitations of Mediterranean Hegemony

Roman hegemony created problems across the Mediterranean. A few historians have imagined a great conspiracy emerging between Mithridates, rebel slaves, and pirates. But the root cause was an imperialism that generated few structures of security to replace those it destroyed, and responded in an inconsistent way to challenges to its authority. This was not the only structural weakness of the Republican empire. Even if the Senate and people had been able to agree on how to exercise their power, had compelled generals on the ground to toe

the line, and had conveyed a clear set of expectations to the cities, kings, and peoples under their indirect authority, Roman rule faced another fundamental weakness, this time geographical.

The defeats of Carthage, Macedon, and Syria had won Rome a Mediterranean empire. It was not just that the directly governed territories were easier to reach by sea than by land. This was in fact true; even provinces that were not actually islands were often separated from Italy by territory not under direct control. But a bigger difficulty was that Romans were most interested in controlling landscapes like those of Italy. Republican imperialism, taking direct rule and informal hegemony together, was exercised over a collection of coastal plains and islands. That is unsurprising. Most imperial nations begin by expanding within a single ecological zone. Chinese empires did not really expand into the tropical south until the Middle Ages.⁶ European empires fought in the eighteenth century mostly over temperate territories—the so-called Neo-Europes⁷—before eventually trying to control sub-Saharan Africa and east Asia; the various central Asian empires—Persian, Macedonian, and Islamic—expanded east and west rather than north. Empire is rarely ecologically adventurous. Settlers prefer familiar landscapes where familiar crops may grow. Romans were slow to master mountains or forests, and treated these landscapes, and their inhabitants, with distrust.⁸

Unfortunately for Rome, however, the Mediterranean has never been a closed system. The Middle Sea is located at the junction of three continents, the interiors of which have always been closely linked to the coastal fringe.⁹ Ecotones between Mediterranean landscapes and continental hinterlands promoted exchanges of goods, technologies, and peoples since the beginning of the Holocene.¹⁰ In Africa and Asia Minor, in Gaul, Spain, and the Balkans, Rome tried to separate off the upland interiors from the parts they wished to control. That strategy was doomed to failure. Rome never had any chance of staying within her ecological comfort zone. It was not the first Mediterranean city-state to underestimate the economic and demographic resources of areas they regarded as barbarous. Greek history is littered with accounts of the terrifying power of groups from the interior, such as Scythians and Thracians and in the end Macedonians. The Arab historian Ibn Khaldun saw a great pattern in Middle Eastern history in which nomads from the margins repeatedly invaded the settled civilizations of the Fertile Crescent, and were then absorbed by them. Chinese history too has been written in terms of a constant struggle for control of its Inner Asian Frontier, the long boundary between the lands of rice-cultivating city dwellers and peoples of the Steppe.¹¹ Both Jugurtha and Mithridates challenged Rome with resources drawn from outside the Mediterranean world. In

Jugurtha's case the Romans had only themselves to blame, since it was they who had tried to restrict him to the Wild West of Numidian territory. From the uplands of the Maghreb he created a powerful army, and based himself in a landscape that Roman armies found hard to deal with. Mithridates made similar use of Anatolia and the Pontic regions, areas that Rome had disdained to rule.

Roman generals were progressively drawn into other continental interiors. The occupation of what is now Andalusia and Mediterranean Spain brought Rome into contact with the much larger tribes of the Meseta, tribes like the Celtiberians with whom two generations of Romans fought between the 180s and the fall of Numantia in 133 BC. There were no easy frontiers before the Atlantic, and it took until the reign of Augustus to reach it. Possession of the Po Valley involved Romans in campaigns to control the Alpine valleys and Liguria. That, together with alliances left over from the war with Hannibal, brought Roman troops to the mouth of the Rhône and the territory of the Greek city of Marseilles. Minor campaigns escalated during the 120s into conflicts with the much larger tribal confederacies of the Allobroges, based in the middle Rhône Valley, and the Arverni of the Central Massif. Rome also exercised some sort of hegemony over the Greek cities and Illyrian tribes of the eastern Adriatic. But behind them, and to the north of the new province of Macedonia, were powerful nations like the Dacians and the Bastarnae and to their east the Thracians.

Rome had little experience to draw on in dealing with threats of this kind. The major tribal confederacies of temperate Europe could marshal armies numbered in the hundreds of thousands, were technologically on a par with Roman troops, and had impressive fortified sites, even if they did not possess an infrastructure of cities and roads.¹² Greek and Roman sources presented northern barbarians as unpredictable savages. But these barbarians were also feared. Romans never forgot the Gallic sack of Rome in 390: traditions varied about whether all or part of the city had fallen, and who should take the credit for Rome's survival, but treasure was piled up against further Gallic menaces until Julius Caesar's day, and the constitutions of Italian cities long had a clause in them requiring them to provide troops in the event of a *tumultus Gallicus*. Greeks on the other hand remembered the events of 279 BC when a raiding party from the Balkans, identified as Kelts or Galatai, had got as far as the sanctuary of Delphi before being driven off, perhaps by the god Apollo himself. Not long after these events three Galatian tribes had crossed over into Asia Minor and set up tribal kingdoms on the plateau, from which Galatian raiding parties held coastal cities to ransom. The reputation of the Attalid dynasty of Pergamum had been founded on their success

in containing the Galatian threat. After the defeat of the Seleucids the Roman general Manlius Vulso marched up onto the plateau and defeated them once again, bringing back great quantities of booty to Rome. But Romans and Greeks alike were well aware that great populations of similar barbarians occupied Europe from the Black Sea to the Atlantic, and further migrations and invasions were possible in the future.

That fear was rekindled in 113 when another horde ran into a Roman army in Noricum in the eastern Alps. Over the next dozen years the horde passed through Switzerland and the Rhône Valley, through central France, down into Spain, and then back again into Italy. En route they defeated a second and a third Roman army in 110 and 105. It was only Marius, the victor of Jugurtha, who finally defeated the two parts of the migration, the Teutones in 102 at Aix-en-Provence, and the Cimbri in 101 at Vercellae in northern Italy. Romans did not feel like rulers of the world now. Eastern kings openly defied their requests for help, watching the growth of Mithridates' power closer at hand. Marius, despite his origins outside the charmed circle of the nobles, and his links with the equestrians and populist politicians, was elected to an unprecedented six successive consulships to deal with the emergency.

Solutions and Failures

Romans were no fools, and the failures of their second-century hegemony were clear to them. Their analysis, however, was rather different from ours. We see inadequate infrastructure; an unsustainable preference for occasional booty over a tributary economy; and an unrealistic desire to control familiar landscapes, while ignoring the hinterlands with which they were joined. Knowing what came next we find it difficult to see why Rome did not move more quickly to institutionalize her power. Romans, however, saw a lack of the moral qualities advertised in the tomb of the Scipiones.¹³ Both the rise of Jugurtha and the ineffectiveness of the first armies sent to deal with him was laid, by Sallust, at the door of the inner circle of the aristocracy, the nobles. Their susceptibility to bribery and their failures of generalship were signs of moral weakness. It was Marius, a man with no senatorial ancestors yet possessed of traditional virtues, who had saved the day first against Jugurtha, and then against the Germans.

One of Marius' associates, Marcus Antonius, was appointed to a command in 102 against the pirates. By good fortune we have large parts of a law passed around this time designed to improve the

government of Rome's directly administered territories in the east.¹⁴ One revolutionary feature was that it required Roman governors and commanders to coordinate their efforts to suppress piracy. It is a sign of a new consciousness of the obligations of empire, and of the will of at least some of Rome's leaders to try to design solutions that went beyond telling a general to raise an army and deal with this or that king, or people, or threat, in whatever manner he thought fit. The law was inscribed on stone and set up in a number of Greek cities. That fact too shows some awareness on the part of the drafters that Rome was no longer regarded as the liberating power. They were certainly right about this. A permanent law court had been set up in 123 BC to hear corruption cases brought by provincials against Romans in the provinces, one with more powerful provisions than its predecessor. It had received a good deal of use.

The decision of the assembly to accept the legacy of Attalus III, the passing of this great law, the commands of Marius and of Antonius, all emerged from a new style of politics that appeared in Rome in the late second century. It was created and led by a small group of senators who presented themselves as champions of the people, the *populus Romanus*. All Roman politics was cast in traditional terms, and they too claimed precedents and predecessors. But in reality both the problems they addressed and the solutions they proposed were new, as was in fact the politicized urban crowd to whom this politics was addressed.¹⁵ The most common term for the new leaders was *populares*.

The most prominent members were Tiberius Gracchus and his brother Gaius, tribunes of the people in 133 and 123 respectively, and descendants of a family that had intermarried with the Cornelia Scipiones, and played a prominent part in the conquest of Spain. Other leading figures included some men from quite different backgrounds, like Marius, but also others from ancient families. Julius Caesar was later to be associated with this movement. They sought the support of the popular assemblies, as their views could not achieve consensus in the Senate, and their rhetoric spoke of the ancient rights and prerogatives of the people. Their legislation included proposals to distribute public land to poorer citizens, to found new colonies outside Italy, and to provide subsidized (and later free) grain to the population of the city of Rome. Many chose to stand as tribunes of the people, converting what had been a minor political office designed to protect the interests of plebeians, into a platform for wide-ranging reform. But they were hardly revolutionaries. Introducing the secret ballot into elections was the limit of their constitutional reform, and they seemed quite content with the structure of assemblies that gave more influence to the propertied classes, and with the senatorial

monopoly of magistracies and priesthoods. Nor were their laws limited to matters of immediate concern to the people, let alone the poor of the city of Rome. No issue of Roman politics, from diplomacy and war to state revenues, the law courts, and Rome's deteriorating relations with her Italian allies, was beyond their interests. What united their proposals was a willingness to form radical solutions to the crisis of the empire, and the oratorical skill to persuade the assemblies to back them when the Senate would not.¹⁶

The programme of the Gracchi and their successors was no more consistent than the policies of earlier generations of senators. The proposal to redistribute public land brought howls of protest from allied communities, many of whose members had quietly if irregularly rented it for generations. Yet they also proposed more rights for the Italians. Their improved corruption court put senators at the mercy of Rome's equestrian order, ostensibly to improve the capacity of provincials to get redress against governors. But the organization of Asia handed the provincials over to those same equestrians by allocating them tax-farming contracts in a way that encouraged short-term exploitation from which governors were now afraid to restrain them. Opponents of these proposals found a common thread in the challenge posed to the leadership of the Senate. The law on piracy required magistrates to swear one by one to uphold it. Clauses like this appear in other legislation of the period. The implication was a grave insult to those who felt part of a class with a hereditary right to rule.

Mutual frustration and distrust led to ferocious condemnations and eventually violence. Both Gracchi brothers died in pitched battles in the streets of Rome, effectively between rival mobs of senators reinforced by their clients. Invoking the rights of the people and proposing radical legislation was not original in Rome. Cato too had made political capital out of his allegedly humble origins as a weapon against opponents of most ancient families. But political murder was something new. The deaths of the Gracchi were only the beginning. Marius was, for a while, an active supporter of another radical tribune, Lucius Appuleius Saturninus. Colonization, land distribution, and attacks on the nobles were once again on the agenda, the popular assemblies were again used to circumvent the Senate, and once again it ended in violence. Marius could have summoned his veteran soldiers to save Saturninus, but he refused to do so. This was the last time such restraint would be shown.

Roman orators and historians since Cicero spent a good deal of time wondering how things had come to this pass. Modern scholars have done the same. Ancient accounts stress the corrupting effects of wealth, and the arrogance brought by empire. Modern writers note

the explosive potential of the city of Rome, doubling in size each generation, a good part of the population composed of migrants without secure employment or close links of clientage to the ancient houses. The measures proposed show a keen sense of the scale and range of Rome's problems, and the solutions included genuinely innovative ideas, some borrowed from Greek history and philosophy. Most of all they show how dealing with the structural problems of the city of Rome, the Italian alliance, and the Mediterranean empire were no longer within the competence of the Senate alone. That these radical solutions were first proposed by political *insiders* perhaps tells us something of unrecorded collective failures of nerve and imagination by the ruling classes of Rome in the decades following the destruction of Corinth and Carthage.

Perhaps the most surprising failure was closest to home. By the late second century the role of Rome's Italian allies had become increasingly problematic: they shared in the strains of continual warfare, but received only a fraction of the benefits. When warfare pressed hard on the Roman citizenry, it pressed hard on the allies too. But the allies did not have a chance to vote on declarations of war, and although they usually received a share of the booty it was not always an equal share. Their commanders took orders from Roman magistrates in the field. The Italians were partners in profiteering from empire, as well as in its acquisition. We find their names on inscriptions set up around the marketplaces of Delos, and in the politics of the great cities of Asia Minor. Overseas they all spoke Latin and were collectively known, and treated, as Romans. Often the same families can be traced making money overseas and spending it in the towns of central Italy. Italians were energetic members of the trade networks that linked the slaving grounds of the east and north, the breadbaskets of the south, the vineyards of Tuscany and Campania, and the metal sources of Spain and the Alps to Rome.

At the centre of these networks was Rome, and many Italians visited, but their interests were generally excluded from the new politics of the *populares*. At best this meant they were excluded from some of the rewards of empire: cheap grain, grand building schemes sponsored by the state, lavish festival games and triumphs, the lucrative opportunities offered by public contracts for which only Roman citizens were eligible, the growing protection offered by Roman courts. At worse they might be the collateral damage of Roman politics, as when the Gracchan land redistributions unintentionally dispossessed Italian tenants on state land. Roman rule over Italy also seems to have become more autocratic. Ancient testimony gathers anecdotes about arrogant acts on the part of individual magistrates. These were the grievances of which they were

conscious, but there were certainly other causes of tension. The growth on the peninsula of a city of half a million must have had profound effects on other Italian towns, especially drawing manpower to Rome. Colonization initiatives had petered out with the final conquest of the lands north of the Apennines: that removed both a possible source of tension, and also opportunities for allies who had sometimes been allowed to share in the schemes. The enrichment of the Roman elite and their investment in slave-villas had effects that are difficult to map. But in every case the Italians suffered from a lack of representation, creating a need to depend on Roman aristocrats who were willing to patronize them. The *domi nobiles* (men who were aristocrats in their own communities) were forced to behave as clients.

The problem had begun to be noticed by the end of the second century, even by the *populares*. But schemes to offer the Italians various kinds of citizenship or legal redress came to nothing. Expectations were repeatedly raised only to be disappointed when the Senate and/or the people refused to back them. The flashpoint finally came in 91 BC. A tribune named Marcus Livius Drusus had proposed a comprehensive political programme designed to heal the political rifts opened by the proposals and murders of the Gracchi and of Saturninus. The plan was an ambitious one, including bringing 300 equestrians into the Senate to smooth over relations there, and a great colonization programme. Some of these elements would re-emerge in Sulla's dictatorship. But it also included granting citizenship to the Italians. Hopes were raised again, and then dashed. The laws he had passed were abolished, and Drusus himself was murdered. This was the final straw. A great alliance appeared almost overnight, one in which the hill peoples of the Apennines, the Marsi, the Samnites, and others, took the lead. Historians disagree about their precise aims—did they want to destroy the Roman state, or become a full part of it? Perhaps the allies themselves were divided.¹⁷ Italian voices are now lost: the speeches made at the time were not recorded, and all historical accounts of the Social or Italian War are coloured by a desire for reconciliation and the teleology of the fall of the Republic. But their tactics were well worked out. Italian leaders knew each other well from service together on Roman campaigns and from participating in a social world that centred on the great houses of their Roman friends. A new capital was declared at Corfinium (renamed Italia), in the heart of the Abruzzi mountains. Coins were issued for a new Italian state. Some depicted an Italian bull trampling on a Roman wolf. Rome suddenly found herself struggling for control of the peninsula for the first time since Hannibal's rout.

Politicians of all sides rallied to Rome's cause. Marius, no longer as popular as when he had routed the Cimbri and Teutones, fought

alongside his rival Sulla. There were two frantic years of fighting, between 90 and 89, with a couple more years of mopping-up actions. Rome won the battles, but conceded all that had been demanded. By 87 most Italians were Roman citizens. The reasons were straightforward. Rome had been fighting wars she had not chosen for nearly two decades, she had only just escaped a repeat of the Gallic sack, and the domestic political system was imploding. Survival without the Italians was unthinkable. And just to encourage them to do the right thing, yet another threat emerged.

War in Italy offered Mithridates of Pontus an unmissable opportunity. His armies annexed the neighbouring kingdoms of Bithynia and Cappadocia in 89 BC. The deposed kings bribed the Roman ambassador Manius Aquillius to compel Mithridates to restore them. But when Aquillius ordered Bithynia to invade Pontus in punishment, Mithridates invaded the Roman province of Asia, executed Aquillius by pouring molten gold down his throat to punish him for his greed, and instructed the Greek cities to demonstrate their loyalty by killing all their Roman residents. Estimates of the Roman and Italian dead range between 80,000 and 150,000. The Pontic armies swept across the Aegean to Athens; there the anti-Roman faction welcomed them with open arms. Victory was short-lived. Sulla marched east to sack Athens. The peace he made with Mithridates was not a permanent solution, but enough to allow him to return to Rome determined to purge the city of *popularis* politics, and of its main exponents. At home and abroad politics had entered a new, and bloodier, phase.

Further Reading

Robert Morstein-Marx's *From Hegemony to Empire* (Berkeley, 1995) expertly tracks the evolution of Roman rule in the east between the fall of Carthage and the supremacy of Pompey. The opening chapters of the first volume of Stephen Mitchell's *Anatolia* (Oxford, 1993) set this story in a rich geographic frame. Rome's equally tentative search for stable limits of power in the western Mediterranean is the subject of Stephen Dyson's *The Creation of the Roman Frontier* (Princeton, 1985); one of the many strengths of this work is the inspiration it draws from comparative studies. The implications of seeing the Mediterranean as a region in which continents meet, rather than a world enclosed in itself, are discussed in several contributions to William Harris's *Rethinking the Mediterranean* (Oxford, 2005).

The best single account of the collapse of the Republican system is the title essay in Peter Brunt's *The Fall of the Roman Republic* (Oxford,

1988). Mary Beard and Michael Crawford's *Rome in the Late Republic* (London, 1999) is full of ideas. Anyone seeking a detailed account of the period is referred to volume ix of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, edited by Andrew Lintott, John Crook, and Elizabeth Rawson (Cambridge, 1994). Howard Scullard's brilliant textbook *From the Gracchi to Nero*, 5th edn. (London, 1982) is still difficult to beat. Modern understandings of what the *populares* thought they were doing, at home and in the provinces, have been revolutionized by the publication of a marvellous edition of their epigraphic laws, in Michael Crawford's *Roman Statutes* (London, 1996). Andrew Lintott's *Judicial Reform and Land Reform in the Roman Republic* (Cambridge, 1992) contributes to the same debate. Important essays on the role of the people in this period are now helpfully gathered in the first volume of Fergus Millar's collected papers, *Rome, the Greek East and the World* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2002).

VIII

AT HEAVEN'S COMMAND?

The most important respect in which Roman civil society surpasses that of other states seems to me to be how it treats the gods. I think too that the very thing that among other people is viewed unfavourably is, among the Romans, a source of cohesion: I mean their respect of the gods. For it is developed to such an extraordinary extent among them—both in their private affairs and in the common business of the community—that nothing is treated as more important than this. This fact seems astonishing to many people.

(Polybius, *Histories* 6.56.6–8)

A Moral Empire

We are, in many ways, still Greeks when we contemplate the rise of Rome. It is not just that we rely heavily on Greek narrative accounts; nor even that we share with our Greek witnesses—Polybius and Diodorus, Dionysius and Plutarch among many others—a sense of ourselves as outsiders looking in on Rome. Even more fundamentally, the way we try to understand how societies work remains firmly based in a tradition of political science that can be traced directly back to classical Greece. When Polybius asked why it was Rome that had conquered the Mediterranean, he found his answer in a unique balance of political and military institutions—a perfect blend of monarchical, aristocratic, and democratic elements—along with the attitudes and habits they inculcated. Religious awe was just one component; he followed the passage quoted above with a good functionalist explanation of its role in stabilizing the social hierarchy. He looked, in other words, for Rome's comparative advantage over its competitors. Another Greek, Aelius Aristides, in a speech of praise addressed to Rome nearly three centuries later, compared Roman success in government to the failure of earlier empires. One key variable he identified was inclusiveness; that Romans were unusually willing to incorporate those they had subjected into the citizen body.¹ Whether or not we agree with these particular arguments, the analytical procedure is familiar.

Romans did not think like this, or not until the Greeks taught them to do so. Even after Rome had grown its own philosophers, they did not supply the most influential explanations of Roman success and failure. To access those we have to investigate the interlinked worlds of moral discourse and religious practice. For from the very earliest records we can access, Roman texts and monuments alike proclaim that Rome had grown great through the virtue of her men, and the favour of her gods.

During the Republic, it was common to attribute Roman successes to the virtue of its leaders, and Roman failures to their vices or occasionally to errors they had made in preparatory rituals. One result was a moralizing rhetoric that coloured all surviving speeches, histories, and biographies and many other kinds of literature.² Right back in the third century BC, the first of the *elogia* carved on the sarcophagi from the tomb of the Scipiones shows the close connection made between what we would call private moral qualities and public conduct. A rich tradition of invective preserves many more accusations of vice than memorials of virtue. The political reputation of Caesar was damaged by allegations that he had allowed King Nicomedes of Bithynia to have sex with him. Few of Cicero's opponents in the trials in which he made his name escaped attacks of this kind. Virtue and vice were also manifested in the public sphere, where Romans performed as speakers and priests and magistrates and generals: so Caesar's success in conquering Gaul was proof of his own dynamic virtues. The tradition persisted into the imperial period. Sallust, writing in the 40s BC, recalled an ancient habit of taking the examples of virtuous men as models for one's own conduct.

For I have often heard that Quintus Maximus, Publius Scipio and the most famous citizens of our state were in the habit of saying that their hearts were set ablaze with the ardent desire for virtue when they looked on the images of our ancestors.³

The remark forms part of a justification of history, but he goes on to say how the practice has fallen into decline, and people today only want to outdo their ancestors in wealth rather than virtues. Similar sentiments were expressed by Tacitus; writing nearly two centuries later he made similar comments at the beginning of his account of the exemplary life of Agricola.⁴ Even the emperors would find themselves under this moral spotlight, as they did in Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars* or Juvenal's *Satires*, although condemnation was generally reserved for those who were safely dead. Roman writers in every age lament the decline of traditional morality, but in fact the moral tradition at Rome was extraordinarily long-lived.⁵ Arguably the content of Roman virtue hardly changed until Christian bishops redefined it in the fourth century: even then new virtues did not

displace old. Procopius' *Secret History* offers an unexpurgated account of the vices of Justinian's court that would have delighted early imperial readers.

That mode of thought also offered an interpretation of the collective history of the Roman people. Roman prosperity derived from the proper management of relations with Roman gods and from ethical behaviour; periods of crisis might be understood as signs of a breakdown in those relations, and of moral decadence. Rome's gods had issued no detailed code of personal ethics, but their support might be lost either by neglecting their cult or through acts of impiety: Polybius followed his account of Roman piety with the observation that Romans always abided by their oaths. Equally the gods gave support to the brave and virtuous, concepts the Romans barely distinguished. When disasters struck or when dreadful omens were reported, the Senate might ask a particular college of priests to consult the oracles known as the Sibylline Books, which generally prescribed a major public ritual or the invitation of a new god to Rome. Occasionally more sinister remedies were employed: some disasters might be caused by one of the Vestals breaking her vow of virginity. If she was found guilty she would be buried alive.

No crisis was greater than the civil wars that convulsed the state between the murder of the Gracchi and Octavian's victory over Antony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium. Naturally these wars came to be explained in terms of collective moral failure, perhaps the effects of the corrupting luxury brought by imperial success. The period saw its fair share of contested omens and struggle for control of religious institutions.⁶ Trials of Vestals were held not long after the murder of Gaius Gracchus, and one source reports the Romans even resorted to human sacrifice as well. A sequence of public panics—were might almost call them episodes of religious hysteria—also gave rise to some wider feeling that failures in moral conduct were in some sense the root of the troubles of the late Republic. Livy addressed this in the preface to his great history, itself a product of the crisis, but not completed until the reign of Augustus. He begins by sketching out the narrative arc of how Rome grew from small beginnings to the point where it is now overburdened by its greatness, contrasts its pristine virtue to the terrible contemporary circumstances, and asks the reader to reflect on

the way of life and customs, and the sort of men and means by which good order at home and empire abroad was won and extended: then as decline sets in, let him reflect on how standards began to slip little by little, then began to slide faster and faster and eventually collapsed until we reach the situation today, where we can bear neither our vices nor the remedies they call for.⁷

Livy's interpretation was not exactly Augustan: the closing phrase is altogether too pessimistic. But the huge investment Augustus put into moral rearmament suggests that ideas of this kind were fairly widespread.⁸

So too does the way reconciliation took place in the years after the battle of Actium brought the civil wars to an end. In 27 BC, the Senate and people of Rome presented Octavian with a great shield on which were listed Courage, Justice, Mercy, and Piety towards the gods and his country. Courage translates *virtus*, the origin of our notion of virtue, but meaning something rather different to Romans. *Virtus* was not a condition but an active force, one connected to manliness, a power that might transform the world. Justice and Mercy were conventional regal qualities. Piety, *pietas*, was the set of dispositions that held Rome's hierarchical society together. *Pius* was the signature virtue of Virgil's Aeneas, repeatedly displayed towards the gods and his father. Freedmen and clients owed *pietas* to their former masters and patrons. It includes recognition of duties, as well as respect for persons. Augustus had displayed these qualities, the Shield proclaims: perhaps the senators also hoped he would continue to display them. The battle of Actium was presented as a 'secular miracle':⁹ by winning it Octavian had saved the state. The title 'Augustus' was awarded to him around the same time. It was not an office, not did it already have some established meaning, but its connotations were easily understood as religious. Augustus' virtues had saved the state, and Rome might now return to a Golden Age.¹⁰ The original shield, itself made of gold, was hung in the Curia Julia in Rome, where the Senate often met. A copy made in Italian marble, and measuring a metre across, has been found at Arles in southern France, where a colony of veteran soldiers had been recently established. A few years later an issue of denarii, the coin in which soldiers were paid, carried an image of the shield. Other coins bear the image of the civic oak crown, a traditional reward for saving the life of a fellow citizen. That too had been awarded to Augustus. Signs of this kind formed both a rationalization of recent history and a manifesto for the future. Rome, they declared, was back on track.

Religious Imperialism?

If disasters signalled a breakdown in relations with the gods, it followed that success was a sign of divine favour. The general whose battlefield vow was answered paid his dues by building a temple to the god in question. Each triumph culminated in the temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline. As with morality and history, this could be imagined on a larger scale. Romans certainly came to believe the gods

supported their wider hegemony. Virgil's *Aeneid* plots the rise of Rome as the fulfilment of a divine plan, the will of Jupiter. How early did Romans begin to suspect they were especially beloved of heaven? There are a few tantalizing hints that already in the third century BC some Romans had begun to feel that the gods/their gods had some special plan for them, and so that their religious action was not exactly on a par with those of others. In the ruins of the temple of Dionysus on the Greek island of Teos, an inscription was found that records a letter sent by a Roman magistrate in the 190s BC confirming the temple's privileges. It also asserts that the Roman people were the most religious of men.¹¹

It is possible that when Polybius remarked on the exceptional piety of the Romans he was reflecting the self-image of the Roman elite. Was the exceptional religiosity of the Romans already a theme of the lost history written by the senator Fabius Pictor, a work to which we owe (indirectly) our most detailed accounts of Rome's earliest major festival the *Ludi Romani*?¹² Pictor had also been part of a delegation sent by the Senate to the oracle of Delphi after Hannibal's victory at Cannae in 216 BC. Polybius had, naturally, many opportunities for observing the religious life of Rome, and ritual was an important concern for many members of the elite. Many senators held priesthoods, and unlike magistracies these were generally held for life: the most important were regularly signalled in ceremony, and were commemorated long after their death. Caesar, Cicero, and the Younger Pliny all held major priesthoods and their writings show how important this was to them. Priestly colleges co-opted new members on the death of an incumbent: the numbers were tightly restricted, and it was a convention not to co-opt an immediate relative. Support in winning priesthoods established lasting ties of gratitude. The *populares* briefly introduced elections, but the emperors ended this, making priesthoods another of the gifts they might bestow. Their prestige survived these transformations. Both in ritual performances and in the meetings of the colleges and the Senate itself, senatorial priests devoted an extraordinary amount of time and energy to the precise management of cult and to dealing with prodigies and religious problems, such as how exactly to declare war on a distant enemy or what ceremonies should be used to bring a particular new god into Rome. Religious knowledge at Rome consisted of expertise in ritual, not in theology, and rituals were fundamental to the workings of the state.¹³ Assemblies, meetings of the Senate, even battles could not begin until the auguries had been taken, that is until the approval of the gods had been established, usually by divining from the flight of birds. Once a general had been given his command, his *imperium*, he acquired a whole range of temporary ritual duties and prerogatives.

Magistrates too performed sacrifices in the course of their civil duties. The Senate was the ultimate mediator between the Romans and their gods. It has even been suggested that the collective authority of the senatorial aristocracy largely derived from its religious functions.¹⁴ All ancient communities had priests, but perhaps in Rome the correlation between political and religious authority was unusually strong.

Yet if we compare the rituals, beliefs, and religious institutions of Rome with those of their neighbours, the Romans seem in many respects very conventional. Most peoples of the ancient world were polytheists: they believed in a plurality of gods, and paid cult to a number of them. A merchant who travelled the Mediterranean around the turn of the millennium would find, in every city he visited, monumental temples, images of the gods, and priests conducting rituals on behalf of the community. The gods were generally treated as powerful social beings—physically close at hand, but of an order of being that transcended the everyday. Rituals were designed to establish their wishes, and to win their support. Winning support almost always involved animal sacrifice. Mostly the animals that were sacrificed were drawn from that small range of domesticates on which all these economies depended. Processions, purifications, hymns, prayers, and music might be added to involve more people. Festivals took place, generally on an annual cycle but also to mark special events, and might involve games or contests of various kinds. Kings and cities were the focus of the grandest cults, but there were also domestic and village cults and even private, personal vows and offerings made to gods. Oracles of various sorts and healing shrines were ubiquitous. All this was true of Greeks and Etruscans, Phoenicians and Samnites, and most of the other peoples of the Mediterranean world.

Each community had its own cults of course, and there were differences that perhaps mattered enormously to worshippers. A few peculiarities were infamous: the Egyptian gods had the heads of animals; the Jews had only one god; the Druids were rumoured to sacrifice not only animals, but also humans. But these scandals stood out against a background of broad similarity. Many gods were in any case shared among peoples who felt themselves related, so all the Greeks worshipped Athena; and all the western Phoenicians Melqart (originally the great god of Tyre), and so on. The Romans had their own bizarre rituals: Greek scholars like Dionysius and Plutarch, as well as Roman ones, devoted some effort to trying to work out what rituals like the October Horse were all about.¹⁵ Quite probably there was no ancient consensus, and the origins of most Roman rituals are now lost, even if we can sometimes see how they functioned in later ages, to mark time, to draw the community together, and to assert the

relative status of those who presided, participated, and only watched.

From at least the archaic period, there had been attempts to find equivalences between the gods of different peoples—Jupiter and Zeus, Hercules and Melqart, Uni and Astarte, and so on. Those connections were made not only by philosophers, antiquarians, historians, and poets, but also by traders, migrants, and envoys who encountered new gods in the communities they visited and wondered how new they were. The bilingual dedications to Astarte/Uni at Pyrgi described in [Chapter 3](#) show how closer relations between nearby peoples, in this case Phoenicians and Etruscans, might bring their gods into a new relationship. It was common to behave as if a single divine order lurked behind the myriad local cults.

Eventually some religious leaders made a virtue of this by deliberately asserting syncretisms: the goddess Isis in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* claims to be known as the Great Mother of the Gods at Pessinus, Cecropian Minerva in Attica, Venus of Paphos on Cyprus, Dictyan Diana to the Cretans, Stygian Prosperina to the Sicilians, Ceres at Eleusis, and also as Juno, Bellona, Hecate, and the goddess of Rhamnous, but really Queen Isis, the form used by the Ethiopians and Egyptians.¹⁶ The Baal of the city of Doliche in Syria spread through the Roman world as Jupiter Optimus Maximus Dolichenus.

Philosophers reached even more radical conclusions, for example that none of the traditional gods was correctly imagined, or that the gods of the poets were demons, lesser deities created by a greater more perfect god who did not share the passions and social roles of humans. Speculations of this kind played a major part in converting the god of the Jews into the universal deity of the Christians. Most of these developments took place in the early imperial period. But Romans were aware of alien gods and the philosophical debate they inspired from the earliest stages of overseas expansion. Pictor's visit to Delphi was not unusual. Many Roman governors of Macedonia visited the sanctuary of the Great Gods on the island of Samothrace, and during the last century BC many prominent Romans were initiated into the mysteries of Demeter and the Maiden at Eleusis; they included Sulla, Cicero, Antony, and Augustus. The literature of the Republic also shows a familiarity with Greek philosophical speculations on the divine: Ennius produced a Latin version of the work of Euhemerus who argued that the gods of myth had once been great men, Lucretius followed Epicurus' line that the gods were impossibly remote from the material world, or perhaps did not exist at all, Cicero's philosophical dialogues *On the Nature of the Gods* and *On Divination* bring conventional Roman thought into contact with the major philosophical schools of his day.¹⁷

Equivalences of this kind ought to have posed real problems for

the management of Roman ritual. If the gods of the Egyptians were the same as those of the Romans (Thoth = Hermes = Mercury for example), then why was it important that Romans follow their own customs when sacrificing? After all, even the name used to address the god mattered enormously in some Roman rituals.¹⁸ Equally, if all the Junones of Latium referred to the same goddess (and also to Astarte of Carthage and Uni of Veii) why was it necessary to persuade the Juno of Veii to come to Rome in 396, Juno Sospita to come from Lanuvium in 338, or to establish cults to Juno Lucina in 375 and Juno Moneta in 344? And what about the idea that a city's gods were in some sense its citizens, and might be expected to give it particular support?

Propertius imagined the gods of the Romans ranged against those of the Egyptians at Actium, while the armies of Octavian and Cleopatra fought below. How could this be related to the idea of a single cosmos? More fundamentally, were the gods of Rome *the gods*, or only the gods of the Romans? No single answer emerged as authoritative. Right up until late antiquity we can find the same Roman senators worshipping a great number of traditional, alien, and syncretized gods, and also debating the minutiae of correct ritual in the priestly colleges. Romans seem to have managed to maintain a mental reservation between a sense of the extreme particularity of individual *cults* and an openness to all sorts of theological and cosmological speculation; between punctiliousness about ritual practice on the one hand, and an apparent lack of concern about belief on the other.¹⁹

If the Roman elite of the middle Republic thought themselves especially pious, and if they attributed success in war to the favour of their gods, is it possible to see this as a driving force in Roman imperialism? That case seems more difficult to make, especially when Rome is compared to other peoples. First, the religion of the Romans does not seem unusual compared to that of other Mediterranean peoples. Many Etruscan and Latin cities had priesthoods very like those of Rome, and some rituals associated with war, like those surrounding the priesthood of the *fetiales*, were probably shared by Italian states. Other cities attributed their success to the gods, and imagined *their* gods to be on *their* side. The statue of Athena spat blood in fury at Augustus' victory over Actium; the god of the Jews lent support against Babylonian, Seleucid, and Roman imperialists.²⁰ Nor did Roman religion offer particularly effective means of integrating conquered peoples. Rome's gods always remained those of the city. Arguably the Roman Empire had no collective ritual system until Caracalla extended the citizenship to all Romans in 212, and the Emperor Decius asked them all in 249 to take part in a *supplicatio*, a collective effort in which all citizens would perform sacrifices to the traditional gods, perhaps in expiation of whatever actions or inactions

were held to be the cause of the ongoing military crisis of that period.²¹

Religion has had a more central place in other imperial expansions. It has been suggested that it was the demands of the Aztec gods for sacrifices that powered the expansion of their power in Mexico, and the divine calling of the Merovingian kings that led to the unification of Frankia and its conversion into the most dynamic and complex of early medieval states.²² It is difficult to imagine a plausible account of the Arab conquests that did not give Islam a key role, or a history of the Crusades that did not stress the capacity of the religious authority of the popes to harness the military energy of medieval Europe. The institutions of the Church were powerful mechanisms for organizing conquered lands and peoples from the Norman conquests in the British Isles and Sicily, through the eastwards expansion of Europe and the settlement of Outremer, right up to the early modern conquest of the Americas. Compared to these phenomena Roman religion seems reactive and inward-looking. Other Roman institutions played a much greater part in promoting and facilitating expansion: patronage and slavery, military alliance, and Roman law are obvious examples. The gods, it seems, were passengers on this journey.

Understanding Empire

What the religious traditions of the Romans did offer, however, were new ways of understanding and coming to terms with their growing power.

Ritual was at the centre of these understandings. There were rituals to mark the departures of generals and their returns, rituals to prepare for battles, the ritual of appealing to a named deity on the battlefield itself, the ritual of hailing a general *imperator* after a victory, the ritual extension of the *pomerium*, the sacred boundary of the city, after Roman territory had been increased, special honours paid to generals who killed their opponents in single combat, and so on.²³ Most famous are the set of rituals drawn together into the triumph.²⁴ Battlefield vows often promised a deity a temple in return for victory. As a result the city began to be filled with victory temples, many along the routes triumphal processions followed.²⁵ Most were rather small. But as the scale of booty increased in the early second century larger complexes were built including great temple complexes for Jupiter, Juno, and Hercules of the Muses by the Circus Flaminius at the southern end of the Field of Mars. Augustus' temple to Mars the Avenger was the culmination of this tradition.

Another mode of using religion to reflect on expansion was offered

by antiquarianism. From the late second century BC some writers had become interested in the history of Rome's many and complex cults. Almost all of what they wrote is lost, as is the most authoritative of all accounts of Roman religion, Varro's *Antiquities Human and Divine*, which even 500 years later was still the target of St Augustine's attack on traditional religion in his *City of God*. But many fragments of antiquarian knowledge of religion survived in later texts. From these we can reconstruct a history of the public cults of the city of Rome in terms of the accumulation of more and more foreign gods and ritual traditions. Varro seems to have thought there was an original core of authentic Roman religion, perhaps the religion established by Numa, the second king of Rome, and Cicero writes about the Lupercalia as older than the city itself. But otherwise the cults of the city had accumulated in historical time. The *haruspices* were believed to have brought from Etruria their art of divining the will of the gods from the entrails of sacrificial victims and other portents. The worship of Apollo and Asclepius had been brought from Greek cities in 433 and 291 respectively. Venus of Eryx came in 217 from Sicily, and Cybele, the Great Mother of the Gods, had come to Rome from Pessinus in Asia Minor in 204. Cults which were considered as imported were managed by a particular priestly college, the *decemviri*, and many were worshipped according to what Romans called 'the Greek rite', although it corresponded to no actual set of Greek rituals.²⁶ The Augustan scholar Verrius Flaccus thought that whole series of gods had been brought to Rome through the ritual of the *evocatio* in which the protective deity of an enemy city was persuaded to defect to Rome. The history of religion thus became a way of telling imperial history.

Antiquarian researches were very speculative, but it really does seem that Romans of the third century BC were aiming to muster the most powerful cults in the Mediterranean world behind their empire. Each new god arrived following a crisis, but the cumulative effect was to create an annexe of the public cults devoted to the gods of the wider Mediterranean. So the 'Greek rite' flags Apollo and the rest as immigrant deities. Cybele, when she was brought to Rome from her Anatolian cult centre, was given a temple on the Palatine and games were set up for her in the Roman festival calendar. But elements of her more exotic rituals were preserved as if to retain a sense that she was a foreigner.²⁷ Fewer new arrivals are attested after the Hannibalic war, and there were periodic expulsions of new cults that had arrived by private agency rather than through the mediation of the Senate and its priests. The Senate's ferocious response to the cult of Bacchus in 186 was the first of several such reactions. Attempts were made to exclude Bacchus, Isis, the god of the Jews, and the god of the

Christians: all entered Rome during the early empire. One way or another accommodations of new cults and links with foreign sanctuaries accumulated right up until the conversion of Constantine.²⁸

Finally, there was the emergence of the idea that Roman rule was divinely ordained.²⁹ By far the most extravagant productions along these lines date to the reign of Augustus, and this is also the point at which the religions of other communities were systematically oriented towards Rome. Yet an air of the divine had long surrounded Rome, and perhaps the emperors did no more than harness the power of the ritual tradition.³⁰ Octavian began his career as the son of a god, for Julius Caesar had been deified after his death, and had received godlike honours just before it. Greek communities had already given honours of that kind to a number of Roman generals. From the start of the second century BC some Greek cities introduced worship of the goddess Roma at home, or else made dedications on the Capitol. There were also cults of the Roman People and of the Universal Roman Benefactors. Less information survives from the west but in Spain some of Sertorius' followers believed he received prophecies from an enchanted deer, and in Gaul cults sprang up around Caesar after his death.



Fig 8. Bronze statuette of Cybele on a cart drawn by lions, 2nd half of 2nd century AD

It is not surprising, then, that Octavian's success at Actium was marked almost immediately by a victory stele at Philae in Egypt on which his name was inscribed in hieroglyphics within a cartouche, a sign that he was considered a pharaoh, nor that offers of godlike honours from the Greek cities of Asia followed soon after. The Shield of Virtue and the title Augustus awarded by the Senate and people of Rome pointed in the same direction. Honours from Italian and provincial communities followed, from client kings like Herod of Judaea and Juba of Mauretania, and from Roman colonies like Tarragona. If some were apparently spontaneous, in most cases it looks as if careful negotiation preceded cult so as to establish exactly what would prove acceptable. In a few cases, such as the creation in 12 BC of a great altar at Lyon where representatives of the Gallic communities met once a year to elect a high priest and hold gladiatorial games in honour of Rome and Augustus, it seems as if an imperial prince took the initiative. There was no single empire-wide

cult of the emperors. Each community found their own way to indicate his proximity to heaven.³¹

The creation of emperor worship has seemed a watershed in Roman religion. It seemed so to some aristocratic Roman writers who generally deplored and ridiculed it. The emperors were their relatives, and they were all too aware of their very human failings. Poetry was an easier medium in which to suggest connections between Roman destiny, the will of the gods, and the person of Augustus. Virgil's *Aeneid* presented a hero led by the gods to found the Roman race, took him on a tour of the site of the future city, a place already pregnant with future history and ancestral cult, and then took him to the Underworld for a glimpse of great Romans waiting to be born. The most explicit and most quoted statement of Rome's imperial destiny is put into Jupiter's prophecy promising Rome *imperium sine fine*, power without limits. Augustan monuments deployed the globe prominently alongside traditional symbols of victory, and thousands of identical portraits of the emperor were produced and placed in every conceivable public and private context. The central public spaces of cities in Italy and the west were transformed by the creation of monumental temples and precincts. Greek inscriptions celebrate unprecedented honours and ceremonial. The personality cult of Augustus evokes inescapable echoes of those of the leaders of totalitarian regimes in the twentieth century: the capacity to mass-produce one man's face in a pre-industrial age is even more impressive.³²

Many imperial nations have come to understand their rule as divinely ordained and sustained. Our idea of the mandate of heaven is Chinese in origin: the sons of heaven mediated between men and gods, and their position depended on the support of the latter. But almost every empire has claimed cosmic sanction. Persian shahs attributed their success to Ahura Mazda. Alexander came to be believed the son of Zeus, and received godlike honours. Max Weber termed the idea that the powerful were powerful by heaven's will 'the theodicy of good fortune': such beliefs offer reassurance that human society is justly ordered and history meaningful. Like all ideologies, beliefs of this kind comfort rulers as well as make their rule seem less arbitrary to their subjects. If we look at early empires more closely we find it is very common that the same emperors sought support from different gods in different parts of their realms. The Achaemenids patronized Marduk in Babylon, Apollo in Greek Asia Minor, and the god of the Jews in Jerusalem. Alexander won support from the oracle of Ammon in the Siwah Oasis west of Egypt. The Macedonian Ptolemies who ruled after him in Egypt became pharaohs. What would have been really innovative was a secular concept of empire.

Further Reading

Catharine Edwards's *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, 1993) has transformed our understanding of Roman morality, inviting us to see moral discourse not as an expression of a particular group of prejudices, but as a highly politicized set of practices central to competition among the elite. Rebecca Langlands's *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, 2007) explores the key virtue of *pudicitia*.

The best introduction to Roman religion is now *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge, 1998), a collaboration between Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price. Also recommended are Jörg Rüpke's *Religion of the Romans* (Cambridge, 2007) and James Rives's *Religion in the Roman Empire* (Malden, Mass., 2007). Mary Beard's *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, Mass., 2007) explores in vivid detail the complex relationships between war and ritual in Rome and the Roman imagination. Paul Zanker's *Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor, 1988) brings out the phenomenal visual impact of imperial rituals in Rome, Italy, and the empire.



Map 3. The Republican empire around 100 BC

KEY DATES IN CHAPTER IX

89-85 BC Mithridatic war, ending in the Treaty of Dardanus. Further wars with Rome followed in 83–81, and again in 73

88 BC Lucius Cornelia marches on Rome rather than give up the command against Mithridates to Marius, initiates a reign of terror, and then marches east

86bc Marius and his ally Cinna become consuls after recapturing Rome.

Widespread political violence. Death of Marius

84bc Sulla returns from the east to depose his enemies who had established themselves in his absence, and to make himself dictator. Imposes political reforms on Rome, resigns dictatorship, and dies in 79

73-71bc Spartacus leads a slave revolt, which engulfed central, southern, and eventually part of north Italy until Crassus defeated him in southern Italy

70bc consulship of Pompey and Crassus. The trial of Verres for corruption as governor of Sicily establishes Cicero's reputation

67bc *Lex Gabinia* creates a super-command against the pirates. Pompey appointed and clears the Mediterranean of pirates in just three months

66-62bc Pompey replaces Lucullus in the war against Mithridates, and then campaigns in Armenia, Syria, and Palestine, reorganizing Roman provinces and client kingdoms across the entire region

63bc Crassus's consulship, the conspiracy of Catiline, Julius Caesar elected *pontifex maximus*

62bc Pompey returns from the east and lays down his command but the Senate is slow to ratify his settlements or provide land for his veterans

60bc Pompey, Crassus, and Caesar form a pact to pool their financial resources and political influence

59-58bc Caesar consul. Then campaigns between 58 and 53 in Gaul, with raids into southern Britain and Germany

53bc Death of Crassus following his defeat by the Parthians in the battle of Carrhae

49-48bc Civil war between Pompey and Caesar ends with Pompey's defeat at Pharsalus and murder in Egypt. Caesar becomes dictator

44bc Caesar murdered on Ides of March by a conspiracy of senators, led by Brutus

43bc Antony, Lepidus, and Octavian form a pact, and eliminate their political enemies, including Cicero

42bc Antony and Octavian defeat Brutus and Cassius, 'the Liberators', at the battle of Philippi

31bc Octavian defeats Antony and Cleopatra, ending civil wars

IX THE GENERALS

His monument is on the field of Mars, and inscribed on it an epitaph which he is said to have composed himself. The substance is that none of his friends outdid him in kindness, nor any of his enemies did him more harm than they received in return.

(Plutarch, *Life of Sulla* 38.4)

Deadly Rivals

Sulla's epitaph is a chilling memorial to the horrors of politics at the end of the Republic. Friendship and enmity were both competitions, and Sulla had won on both accounts. He died owing no debts of gratitude, and leaving none of his rivals unpunished. Perhaps this was a traditional aspiration, but the scale of Sulla's realization of it was truly terrifying.

Sulla had served under Marius in the war against Jugurtha and had pulled off a political coup by having the Numidian prince betrayed into his, rather than into Marius', hands in 107 BC. That compounded a rivalry based on their opposing political positions. Marius, the new man, was the champion of the people, while aristocratic Sulla was better liked by the nobility. He continued to distinguish himself as a general in the wars against the Germans, on an eastern command in Anatolia, and then again in the Social War against the Italians. Elected consul for 88 BC, he was the obvious man to be given the command against Mithridates, and so he was. But then civil conflict made another of its lethal intersections with Roman imperialism. A tribune named Sulpicius Rufus passed a law transferring the command to Marius. That was a scandal, but one that was dwarfed by what Sulla did next. Refusing to accept the decision, he marched his soldiers into the city, had Sulpicius killed, and drove Marius into exile. Master of Rome, he compelled the Senate to pass his own legislation, including reassigning the eastern command to him. Sulla then marched east to Macedonia, rapidly put Mithridates' generals on the defensive, and laid siege to Athens. He was as implacable there as in Rome: the Athenian *agora*, its ancient marketplace, was awash with blood. The story goes that Sulla only agreed to stop the massacre because of his

love of classical Greek culture, saying that he spared the few for the sake of the many, the living for the sake of the dead. Then he pressed on to Asia to make a shameful peace with Mithridates at Dardanus. The king was granted his lands, recognized as a Roman ally once again, and effectively forgiven his crimes in Asia in return for supporting Sulla. For Sulla was keen to return. In his absence he had been outlawed, and his enemies Cinna and Marius had seized control of the city, waging their own reign of terror. Perhaps fortunately both were dead before Sulla got back home. His army invaded Italy in 84 and he soon seized the city. There he had himself made dictator and issued a list of his enemies, many of them associated with the *popularis* movement and friends of Marius. Those proscribed on the list could be killed with impunity and lost their property: in a cunning move it was auctioned off at knock-down prices, thereby implicating the buyers in Sulla's coup. A few of the proscribed were killed, others—including the young Julius Caesar—fled for their lives. Sulla then used his dictatorship to impose his own political solution in a series of laws that in some ways resembled those proposed by Drusus just before the Social War. There would be a larger Senate (so recruiting the most prominent of the equestrians and ending the rift between the two orders engineered by the Gracchi); the tribunes were stripped of most of their powers, making it much more difficult for *popularis* politicians to use the assemblies to outflank the Senate (as the Gracchi, Saturninus, and Sulpicius Rufus had done); the Senate would control the courts, freeing governors from the need to kowtow to equestrian juries; and senatorial careers were to be subjected to a stricter discipline with minimum ages for the senior magistracies. Sulla also distributed land to his soldiers, imposing colonies on many Italian cities: Pompeii was among those chosen and we can follow in detail the uneasy coexistence of ancient Oscan families and Sullan veterans in the politics of the city over the next few decades. Then Sulla surprised everyone once again, by resigning the dictatorship in 80. The next year he died in retirement of natural causes.¹

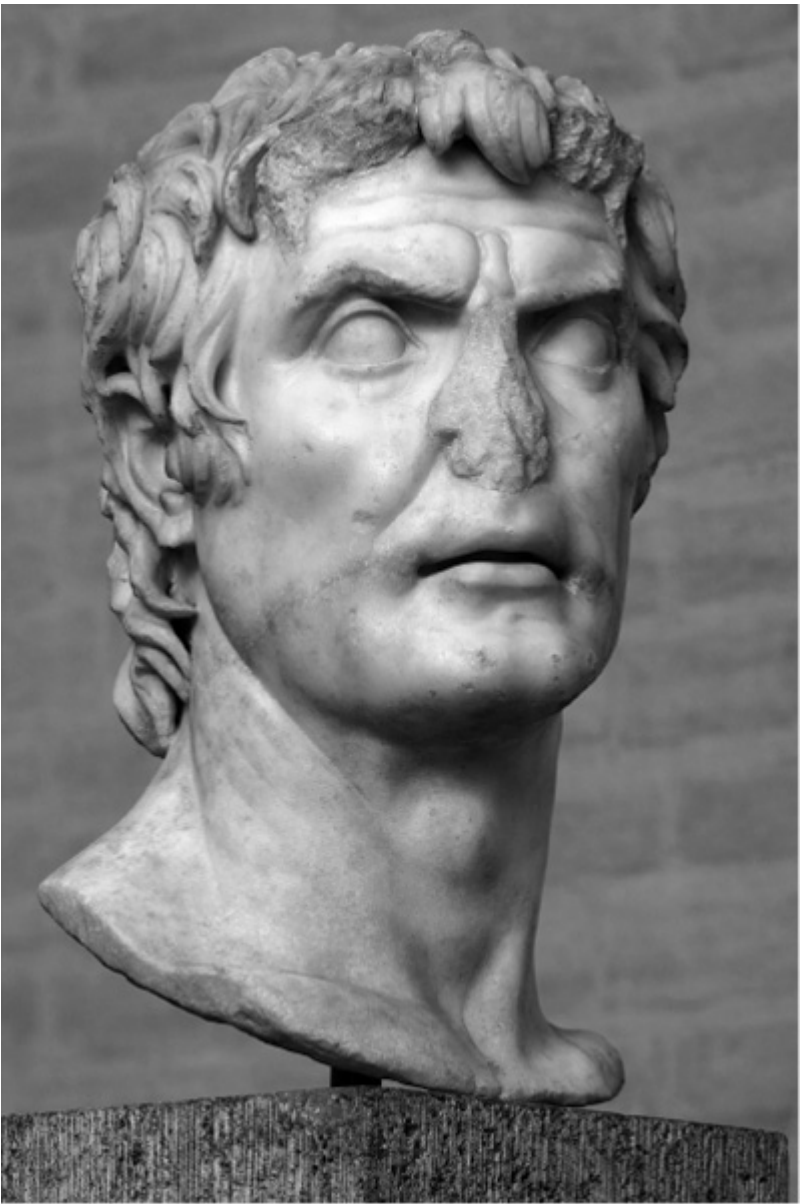


Fig 9. Bust of Sulla in the Munich Glyptothek

Sulla left a grim legacy. It was not so much the constitutional laws, which were broken and abolished during the 70s with no power to protect them, or the administrative reforms, which were uncontroversial. But the example he set was a terrifying one. Sulla was the first general to attack Rome with a Roman army. Sulla made the dictatorship (originally an emergency measure designed for moments when the city was in peril) into a tool for suspending civil society.

Sulla invented proscription. His violence and the feuds it stirred up haunted Rome for a generation. When Pompey won his victories in the east in the 60s, it was widely feared he would return 'like Sulla'. Julius Caesar made himself dictator in the 40s. Octavian and Antony issued their own proscriptions. And politics had become incurably partisan. Perhaps the Gracchi had been idealists, and maybe Drusus had genuinely thought he had a solution to the Italian question. After Sulla, Roman politics got personal.

Sulla was not the first, or the last, reformer to forget that the act of changing the constitution sets a precedent for future changes, even if it is intended to bring harmony and stability. A number of his innovations were sensible, such as increasing the number of praetorships to provide enough magistrates and ex-magistrates to govern Rome's growing empire. Others, like increasing the size of the Senate, were pragmatic, especially given all the potential new recruits from the enfranchised Italian cities. But his solution did not tackle the conditions that made his rivalry with Marius possible. Personal rivalry was old as Rome. The tomb of the Scipiones shows the high value placed on individual achievement as well as on the name of the greatest families.² From Cato the Elder to late antiquity we can hear aristocrats singing the praise of great figures of the past while condemning the vices of their rivals. Cicero and Sallust occasionally imagined that before the tribunates of the Gracchi the virtues of individuals like Scipio Aemilianus had been harnessed to the common cause. Livy celebrated mythical acts of heroic self-sacrifice in the early days of the Republic.

But the lethal innovation of the last century BC was the involvement of the army. Marius had very nearly deployed his veterans in support of his *popularis* allies, but in the end it was Sulla who took the first step. The close bonds formed between Marius and Sulla and their veterans were not purely sentimental, nor even a recognition of the great quantities of booty that might be won in some campaigns. The increased recruitment of citizens without land made them depend on their generals for resettlement: Sulla's army marched against Rome on the first occasion because they wanted eastern booty, and on the second in order to win land. He did not disappoint them. Why would future Roman armies not do the same as they had? None of Sulla's reforms touched this problem. Augustus would solve it by creating a military treasury with hypothecated revenue to pay fixed discharge bonuses to the veterans of what had become a standing army, one bound to the emperors by ritual and ideology as well as self-interest. No solution of that kind was, as far as we know, ever discussed during the Republic. Romans still could not conceive of an alternative to a citizen army commanded by an aristocratic general.

Besides, Sulla's own career had established a model of the kind of behaviour he tried to outlaw, one that would be imitated by his lieutenants, including Lucullus, Crassus, and Pompey, and his enemies, especially Caesar. The failure of his constitutional solution within a decade of his death in 79 showed the power of the competitive urges he tried to stem. During the 70s the next generation of generals, most of them Sullan protégés, waged ferocious wars around the Mediterranean. Their opponents were very various. Pompey hunted down Marian survivors first in Africa in 82–81 and then in Spain in 77–71; Crassus waged war on Spartacus' slave rebellion in 72–71; Marcus Antonius and Quintus Caecilius Metellus both took the name Creticus for their campaigns against pirate strongholds on Crete in 71 and 69–67; while Sulla's oldest deputy, Lucullus, won the prized command against Mithridates. Every kind of campaign strengthened the bonds between generals and their armies, making renewed civil war ever more likely.

Most impressive of all was Pompey. After the long campaigns in Spain against Sertorius, Pompey returned to Italy just in time to join Marcus Crassus in the war against Spartacus, and to steal some of his thunder. By 70 BC, Pompey and Crassus were consuls together, in an uneasy alliance. This was the year Cicero drove Verres into exile, with a little help from Pompey, in fact. But it was a great command against the pirates, obtained with the help of Gabinius, that enabled Pompey to finally pull ahead of his competitors. His rapid success led to another bill, supported by Cicero among others, by which the war against Mithridates was transferred from Lucullus to Pompey. Pompey rapidly repelled Mithridates, who fled to the Crimea and committed suicide, dismantled his kingdom, and pursued his allies. He then remained in the east, in effect conducting a global reorganization of Roman territories and alliances along the Parthian frontier.

During Pompey's absence Rome was gripped once more by civil conflict. Cicero was consul in 63 and had to deal with a conspiracy that drew on a poisonous cocktail of social discontent and frustrated aristocratic ambition. Its leader, Catiline, enjoyed some real support and sympathy, including that of both Crassus and Caesar who shared his *popularis* politics. Cicero was given a free hand to arrest and execute the conspirators largely because the majority of senators, remembering Sulla's terrifying return from the east in 84, feared the kind of solution Pompey that might impose if it were left up to him. The same year Caesar managed to bribe his way to election as the most senior priest, the *pontifex maximus*.



Fig 10. Bust of Julius Caesar

Pompey finally returned in 62 BC and surprised many by stepping down from his command and dismissing his troops. But when the Senate would not ratify his eastern settlements or help find land for his soldiers, he formed a new alliance with Crassus and Julius Caesar. Historians today know this as the First Triumvirate, but it had no formal legal standing. Backed by the threat of Pompey's veterans, combined with Pompey and Crassus' financial muscle, and the

influence that Crassus and Caesar had over the people, the three effectively ran Rome for nearly a decade, picking the magistrates, allocating provinces and armies (mostly to themselves), and making debate in the Senate or the assemblies pointless. Their control was precarious and frequently challenged, and their opponents repeatedly tried to pull them apart. At times they sponsored different gangs in the city. For much of the 50s, Rome was a scene of mob warfare and appalling violence. Yet mutual interest kept them together.

What they themselves wanted most were super-commands of the kind Pompey had already enjoyed. After holding the consulship in 59 Caesar took the province of Cisalpine Gaul, the area that stretched across the Po Valley and up to the Alps. He was assigned a grand army and team of senatorial deputies, termed legates. The province of Transalpine Gaul was soon added to the command. It seems Caesar had first expected to be marching north-east into the Balkans following rumours of war, but news that the Helvetii were planning to leave their Alpine territory and pass through southern Gaul diverted him west of the Alps. That war began eight years of campaigns that resulted in the conquest of Gaul and invasions of Britain and Germany. The first books of his *Commentaries* go to great lengths to explain why each campaign was justified. It is difficult to believe Roman interests were really threatened, even by the Helvetian migration, but memories of the Cimbri and Teutones were recent, and he was careful to make the connection. An element of mission creep is clear. Caesar's later books spent less time justifying particular conflicts, and instead emphasized the unprecedented extensions of the power of the Roman people he had brought about.³ Roman armies had crossed both the Ocean and the Rhine for the first time, and city after city had fallen to his armies. News of his victories was greeted with public rejoicing in Rome. The campaigns were certainly lucrative, allowing Caesar to pay off the debts accumulated in successive election campaigns, and to begin several monumental building projects in Rome. The same years saw the complete disappearance of the gold and silver coinages of Gaul.

Caesar's successes only inflamed the ambitions of his allies. By agreement among the three of them, Pompey and Crassus took the consulship for 55 BC. Both then claimed their own great provinces. Pompey was given Spain with the unprecedented permission to govern *in absentia* through legates of his own choosing. Crassus was assigned the province of Syria and a command against the Parthian Empire, with an army to match. The Roman and Parthian empires shared a small border and a much greater zone over which each tried to exercise influence. There is no sign that the Parthians wanted war with Rome; indeed they had declined to support Mithridates. All the

same they looked a tempting target, and in late 55 BC Crassus headed east with an army based on seven legions. He spent the next year in Syria building up his forces. But not long after crossing the Euphrates in 53 BC, Crassus was defeated at Carrhae. His army was slaughtered and their standards were captured. Crassus himself was soon tracked down and killed. Avenging Crassus was allegedly one of Caesar's future plans when he was assassinated. Two decades later Mark Antony did mount an invasion, one that was unsuccessful, if not as disastrous as that of Crassus. Parthia took advantage of Roman civil wars to raid the east, but seemed content enough to cease hostilities when Augustus offered peace. Every indication shows that Crassus' campaign was as unnecessary as it was disastrous.

Up until the death of Crassus, the three-headed beast that ruled Rome seemed to be going from strength to strength. Together Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus commanded huge armies. Cicero and his friends were outraged, but the generals' exploits made them popular with the people. Only those senators who did not enjoy their patronage were left out of the loop, and it was easy to see the sour grapes behind the high-minded talk of senatorial liberty.

The Governance of the Empire

Rivalry between individuals was traditional in Roman politics. Roman writers even idealized it, seeing a competition to outdo each other in virtue as one of the driving forces of Roman success. A fragment of a speech of Gracchus warns the people of Rome that all those who address them are motivated by self-interest but his own self-interest is in providing them with the best possible advice. That was a rhetorical flourish but it reflected an ideology as well. Yet the negative side of competition was all too evident. Civil war was bad enough. But there was also an incoherence built into any system that worked by delegating the power to make major decisions to individuals without imposing on them any discipline beyond the fear of the law courts on their return. During the 50s even that sanction had disappeared. But perhaps one reason the activities of Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus did not arouse more opposition outside the senatorial elite was that the system they had overthrown was clearly badly broken already.

In [Chapter 7](#) I told the story of how, in the generation following Rome's final defeat of Macedon, the Mediterranean world was gripped by successive crises. I explained those crises as a result of the inconsistent treatment given former allies such as Jugurtha and Mithridates, combined with an erratic alternation of long periods of neglect of the provinces and terrifying interventions like the sack of

Corinth. Where tax collection had been handed over to public contractors with no interest in justice or the long-term viability of imperial government, all the conditions were ready for rebellion. These problems were structural. The Senate's 'policy' was little more than the sum of the individual opinions of its members. There are signs that some *popularis* politicians thought that the behaviour of governors and generals could be controlled through subjecting them to more independent courts and more detailed legislation. One of Gaius Gracchus' most unpopular acts had been to give control of the corruption courts to the equestrians. His enemies were outraged. Why should they be subject to trial by their social inferiors? And anyway, it meant more people who would have to be paid off. Similar ideas lay behind the great law on the provinces that required Roman pro-magistrates to work together, and alongside allies including the kings of Cyrene, Cyprus, and Egypt. But the failure of *popularis* politics after Sulla—and the absence of institutions able to enforce such laws—meant that that provincial government in the last century BC was no better than it had been in the second.

The enemy of consistency was ambition. Many senators never won more than a single magistracy in their lives. For the rest a provincial command would come once, or maybe twice in a lifetime. With competition at home becoming more intense and more expensive, many governors clearly felt they had to make their year of service pay. The infamous Verres, whose prosecution in 70 BC established Cicero's reputation, allegedly quipped that a governor needed to raise three fortunes in his provinces, the first to pay back the debts he had incurred in getting elected, the second for himself, and the third to bribe the jurors on his return. Then there were the many other groups with vested interests in the provinces, Roman landowners and traders, those who lent money to provincials, and most of all those with public contracts, like the tax farmers. These were well connected, and an ambitious politician dared not offend, in his one year in office, a constituency who could help or hinder him for the rest of his career. Even Cicero, who tried very hard to govern justly during his single period as a governor in Cilicia in 51–50, found it hard to resist demands from back home. One man wanted help recovering sums he had lent provincials at ruinous rates, another wanted Cicero to find some panthers he could display in Rome, and even Cicero wondered if the risk of suppressing some banditry would be worth it if he could return to celebrate an *ovatio*, a sort of lesser triumph. Others had fewer scruples. Pro-magistrates exercised the power of life and death in their provinces, gave justice to cities and kings, and when far enough away from Rome they could behave like little autocrats. Many did. Verres allegedly crucified his enemies in sight of Italy. Another

governor, when drunk, ordered an enemy envoy to be executed on the spot, to please his lover who complained that by accompanying him on campaign he was missing the games in Rome. Not all governors were wicked, but none wished to be regulated.

To the other structural deficiencies of the Republican hegemony, then, we can add an inability to operate effectively on any scale larger than could be handled by one man with a moderate-sized army and an oversized ego; and a system of government that more or less promoted corruption. Extortion, whether by governors themselves or conducted by tax farmers and other *publicani* with the governor turning a blind eye, increased the support that provincials gave figures like Mithridates. The reluctance of governors to work together made it difficult to tackle very large-scale problems. There had always been stories of failures of cooperation between consuls, both at home and on the battlefield. But as the empire grew, the problems became more acute.

Piracy is a case in point.⁴ The enemy was highly mobile, not confined to one particular sphere of command, and indeed could move rapidly between them. Pro-magistrates commanding in Macedonia and Asia, the free cities of the Aegean, and the kings of western Asia could not work together effectively. The first Roman attempt to deal with piracy was probably the campaign waged by Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony's grandfather) in 102 BC. It seems a Roman fleet was moved into the Aegean, based first in the allied city of Athens, then campaigned off the southern coast of Asia Minor, supported by other allies including two Greek cities with small fleets, Rhodes and Byzantium. After victories in Cilicia, Antonius was awarded a triumph. But whatever solution he achieved was merely temporary. The *popularis* law on provincial government was passed just a year or two later, and piracy clearly remained a major priority. A new pro-magistrate is now mentioned in Cilicia, notorious as the 'bad lands' of Asia Minor. Yet the problem persisted. Some pirate bands cooperated with Mithridates against Rome in the 80s. Pirates were able to kidnap a young Julius Caesar in the mid-70s. Kidnapping for ransom was a nuisance but the real risk came from the pirates' capacity to interrupt the supply of grain to the city of Rome. The conquest of Crete in 69 was largely motivated by the desire to shut down other pirate bases. Yet pirates were mobile and had many bases. Food shortages and rising prices in Rome pushed piracy to the top of the political agenda. With hindsight we can see the problem was systemic, the product of the absence of any permanent security system in the region. The great Greek kingdoms could no longer maintain fleets, and naval powers like Rhodes had been humiliated. No permanent fleets or naval patrols were created until the reign of Augustus.

This was the context for Pompey's first great command. One of the tribunes for 67 BC, Aulus Gabinius, passed a law stating that a single commander be appointed against the pirates, with power to coordinate up to twenty-five legates (deputy commanders) and a fleet that perhaps numbered between 250 and 300 vessels not counting the contribution of allies. Even more radically, the commander would have authority to raise troops in any Roman territory and would outrank (literally have greater power, *imperium maius*, than) any pro-magistrate in an area extending 50 miles inland from the coast. The idea of giving any single magistrate or pro-magistrate the right to command other senators, both his deputies (legates) and other regular pro-magistrates in their own provinces, had no precedent. The command was to be for three years. It was designed for Pompey and, after some manoeuvring, he was given it. In practice he needed only three months. The Mediterranean was swept end to end, piracy was eliminated, and the captured pirates resettled in provincial communities. Pompey's reputation was extraordinary, hence the award of the other major command, that against Mithridates. But the bigger lesson was also clear. Look at how much could be achieved with a new style of general and a new style of command.

During the 50s the lesson was applied elsewhere. Caesar's command in Gaul included not only a number of legions, but also a number of senatorial deputies. As a result he could divide his army and organize much more complex operations. He was also able to return periodically to southern Gaul or north Italy, leaving his legions under the command of others. Pompey was allocated another great command in 57 BC—a five-year commission to secure the grain supply of the capital—and like Caesar was allocated senatorial legates. Pompey developed a further variant on this theme in 55 BC when he obtained permission to rule a vast province (and command its armies) from a distance, again through his legates. Crassus' five-year command in Syria was clearly intended to be on the same scale as Caesar's in Gaul, which was renewed for five years at the same time. Brutus and Cassius were given great commands in the east as part of the settlement after their murder of Caesar in 44: they used their commands and provinces to prepare for war against Octavian and Antony, who in their turn acquired vast commands as a means of dividing the spoils of victory at Philippi (and to help them prepare for the next civil war, against each other).

Romans had no special term for these super-commanders. None was needed, since they were so few in number. But there was clearly some recognition that something new had appeared. Greek cities gave them godlike honours similar to those they had previously lavished on the greatest kings. Among Romans a fascination with Alexander the

Great appears. Pompey was said to have worn Alexander's cloak in a triumph; Caesar reputedly wept before a statue of the Macedonian king, because he had achieved so little by the age at which Alexander died; Octavian paid homage at Alexander's huge tomb in the heart of Alexandria. With hindsight we see the role of emperor emerging from the actions of these individuals. Interestingly it emerges first in the provinces, where the need for coordination of military power and revenues over great regions was most obvious. Only once it was established there was the controlling power of emperors applied to the bitter division of politics in the capital. The empire, in other words, had saved (and captured) the city.

More concretely the experience of the 70s, 60s, and especially the 50s had created a series of institutional innovations which would provide important precedents for the emperors. First, governors (or their equivalents) could now in effect be appointed not elected, and in ways that separated the role from that of civil magistrate. Second, the effectiveness of one commander coordinating operations over geographically vast areas and huge armies had been demonstrated. Cicero's speech *On the Command of Gnaeus Pompey* even provides an explicit statement along these lines, the first draft of an imperial ideology. Third, vast armies were now recruited and commanded, deployed, and resettled in ways over which the Senate and people had effectively no say. Finally, systems of revenue raising had in a rather piecemeal manner begun to be fitted to the needs of the imperial state. These innovations were resented by many, most of all by those senators who were not beneficiaries. Yet they would be imitated and adapted over the years of civil war that followed, and provided inspiration in the years ahead. Caesar as dictator initiated great colonial ventures to settle his veterans, and planned wars against Parthia and Dacia on the same scale as that of Pompey against Mithridates. Antony and Octavian settled their own veterans around the Mediterranean. Whenever there was only one such super-general on the scene—Pompey in the 60s, Caesar in the 40s, and Octavian after Actium—Roman military and political action briefly achieved a new coherence. From the chaos of the Republican empire, Rome had sleepwalked into military autocracy, and it worked.

Civil War

Crassus had perished in the aftermath of Cannae in 53 BC. By 50 BC both Pompey and Caesar were preparing for war. Perhaps the pact between the two great generals was inherently unstable. Their marriage alliance had ended in 52 with the death of Pompey's much younger wife Julia, Caesar's daughter. And then there were the efforts

of more than half the Senate fuelling distrust and jealousy. The war was mostly fought in the Balkans. Defeated at Pharsalus in 48, Pompey fled to Egypt, the last great kingdom not to have succumbed to Roman arms. There he was killed in an attempt by those in power to ingratiate themselves with Caesar. Caesar himself spent much of the time between Pharsalus and his own assassination in 44 BC tracking down Pompey's supporters. The provinces were easier to master than the capital. Despite granting amnesties to most of his former enemies, and lavishing games and monumental building on the city of Rome, he failed to rally Rome around him. Politics was no more free than it had been in the 50s, and neither Caesar nor anyone else had much idea of how his position could be institutionalized. Many of those involved in the conspiracy that led to his murder on the Ides of March, 44 BC, were former supporters of Pompey, but the initial euphoria waned when it was clear they had no solution for Rome's ills. Besides, the army and Caesar's followers could not forgive the murder.

A phoney peace followed. But within two years civil war had resumed, this time with Caesar's heir Octavian allied with Caesar's deputy Mark Antony against the 'Liberators', Brutus and Cassius. Both men died after their defeat at Philippi in 42 BC. Octavian and Antony nearly came to blows the next year, but in the event a new pact was negotiated and each had their great commands. Neither Octavian in the Balkans nor Antony in a campaign against Persia was very successful, and the balance of power was unchanged. Pompey's last son, Sextus, survived until 36 BC. After that everyone was a Caesarian and it was only a matter of time before conflict between the two broke out. From 33 BC a propaganda war was in full swing, and in 31 the two sides engaged in north-west Greece at the battle of Actium, a victory for Octavian. Like Pompey before them, Antony and Cleopatra made for Egypt where both committed suicide in 30 BC. Once again there was only one super-commander in place.

The domestic politics of the last generation of the Republic are documented in great detail by Cicero's correspondence, and also by the works of Sallust and Caesar written in the 40s. Contemporary historians were also aware of the importance of this period, but very little of their accounts survives. It has been a major aim of recent scholarship to try to recover their perspective.⁵ Writers of the imperial period, including the biographer Plutarch and the historians Appian and Dio, had access to histories that are now vanished, and they used them to write vivid accounts of what they knew to be the last days of the Republic.

All these accounts focus on the struggle between personalities: Marius versus Sulla; Sulla's dictatorship; the competition between his lieutenants Lucullus, Pompey, and Crassus; the abortive coups of

Lepidus and Catiline; the alliance between Pompey, Caesar, and Crassus in the 50s; and finally a series of civil wars, Pompey versus Caesar, Caesar's murderers versus Octavian and Antony, Octavian and Antony versus Pompey's son Sextus, and finally Octavian versus Antony. Told in this way, the history of the provinces often seems peripheral. As it happens there were some universal historians in the tradition of Polybius, but almost none of their works have survived.⁶ Much missed is the historical work of the philosopher Posidonius which picked up where Polybius left off and narrated events into the 80s BC. Like Polybius he knew the greatest Romans of the day, and had travelled widely within their empire. The fragments of his work show he thought hard about the nature of the Roman Empire.⁷ Diodorus' *Library* is the last great work composed before Actium, or the latest that has survived. As far as we can tell, this generation of provincial observers accepted the fact of Roman domination, the creation of which had so astonished Polybius, but they found the Roman world a very precarious one in which to live. So much depended on whether a community picked the right side in a civil war, attracted the patronage of a winner, or found itself caught up in a conflict originating far from home. The same picture emerges from the great inscriptions set up by eastern cities, recording honours given to one or another Roman general in the hope of staying on his good side. Rome's subjects feature in much civil war history mostly in a subordinate role. Northern Greece was the setting for three major civil wars in the 40s and 30s, Asia had to pay for the armies raised by Brutus and Cassius, Egypt was acquired by Octavian almost accidentally, because Cleopatra had picked the wrong ally. A few cities consistently chose well, others badly—Sparta and Aphrodisias were exceptionally fortunate, Athens seemed unable to pick a winner (even after Actium). Added to this, Roman civil wars offered opportunities for old enemies to settle scores—within or between cities—and even for foreign powers like Parthia to take advantage. Episodes of peace might bring land confiscations and the imposition of colonists. And when rivalry between Roman generals resulted in grandiose foreign wars deep in temperate Europe or on the Persian frontiers, allies and subjects were dragged along. All this is exactly what we would expect. An empire's provinces genuinely are peripheral; their history is always driven by conflicts in the metropole, as it has been in recent times from Eretria to Cuba.

The fall of the Republic probably was good news for many provincials if only because the emperors took the long view and in the end preferred to rule in partnership with provincial elites.⁸ Certainly the impact of Augustan autocracy is immediately visible in the works that follow that of Diodorus, including Livy's vast history, the

Antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and the *Geography* of Strabo. Peace at the centre made the empire itself more predictable, allowed provincial communities and their leaders to plan in the long term, to invest in strategies of loyalty and collaboration. Tacitus put it pithily in a coda to his account of the origins of the Principate:

The provinces had no objection to the new state of affairs. For they distrusted the empire of the senate and people because of the rivalry of the most powerful men and the greed of the magistrates, against which the laws gave no protection, since they were corrupted by violence, ambition and most of all by bribery.⁹

Conquest Unlimited

The same generation that tore Rome apart in civil wars was also responsible for the most dramatic period of Roman expansion. Vast armies marched out in all directions, on the flimsiest of pretexts. They reached the Atlantic Ocean and the Caspian Sea, plunged deep into temperate Europe, and challenged the greatest empire of the day, Parthian Persia.¹⁰ Great tracts of territory were annexed, the number of provinces increased enormously, and military colonies were scattered around the Mediterranean. There were spectacular defeats too: Crassus' invasion of Parthia in 53 BC ended with 20,000 Romans dead and 10,000 captured. There were catastrophic defeats in Germany too, most dramatically the loss of three entire legions in AD 9 during a three-day-long battle in the Teutoberger Forest near present-day Osnabrück.

Other great campaigns almost happened. The Bastarnae of the northern Balkans defeated the governor of Macedonia, Antonius Hybrida, in 62 BC. Cicero's correspondence from the early 50s shows him apprehensive of Burebista, king of the Dacians in what is now Romania, who spent much of the last century BC creating a great tribal federation of peoples. Aulus Gabinius, who had served under Sulla, Lucullus, and Pompey, was proconsul of Syria between 57 and 54 BC: he used it as a base to impose a new king on Egypt and to intervene in the politics of Judaea. Cyrenaica drifted in and out of Roman influence over the same period. Elaborate arguments were made to justify this or that campaign, but there is no doubt that the main driver was competition between the most powerful men in the state. The collapse of the Senate's authority, the creation of super-commands, and most of all the success of Pompey had altered the rules of the game. And it did not matter if ridiculous risks were taken, since if one general failed, there would always be another waiting to take his place.

But the gains outweighed the losses. When Sulla died in 79 BC

Rome had just regained the position of dominant power in the Mediterranean world. Roman forces controlled Italy up to the Alps and most, if not quite all, of the coastal plains of the western Mediterranean. East of the Adriatic she controlled parts of the Balkans and the province of Asia. On the death of Augustus in AD 14, just under a century later, the territorial empire flanked the Atlantic from the mouth of the Rhine to the Straits of Gibraltar, and surrounded the Mediterranean (Our Sea, as the Romans came to call it) in a ring of provinces and client kingdoms. The Black Sea too was virtually a Roman lake, and Anatolia and the Near East were under Roman control. To the south, the frontier ran along the edge of the Sahara and extended to the southern frontier of Egypt. The eastern limit was fixed by the Euphrates and a line that included most of Anatolia. Its northern boundaries were the Rhine and the Danube. Much of this area was administered through provinces, the rest through client kingdoms which were closely controlled by Rome. The greater part of this vast extension had been acquired during the period when Pompey, Caesar, and finally Octavian/Augustus had led the state.

Further Reading

Many narratives, and quite a few novels, tell the story of the lives of the great figures of the last days of the Republic. It is also a period that emerges vividly from ancient writings. Plutarch's lives of Sulla, Caesar, Pompey, Cicero, Crassus, Lucullus, and other figures offer as lively an introduction to these characters as any modern treatment. Even better, Caesar's *Gallic War* and Cicero's *Letters* offer actual contemporary witness to the events of the 50s. Sallust's *Catiline Conspiracy* offers a view of the great crisis of Cicero's consulship written in the 40s BC when the end of the Republic was not yet in sight.

An age dominated by great men is naturally a gift to biographers. Arthur Keaveney's *Sulla: The Last Republican* (2nd edn. London, 2005) is both learned and lively. Robin Seager's *Pompey the Great: A Political Biography* (2nd edn. London, 2002) is a classic. Cicero and Caesar have attracted many excellent biographers. For vivid evocation of each figure I recommend Elizabeth Rawson's *Cicero: A Portrait* (London, 1975) and Adrian Goldsworthy's *Caesar: The Life of a Colossus* (London, 2006).

Many of Ronald Syme's interpretations of Roman politics have been challenged, but his *Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939) is a gripping read, and in its way is also an interesting document of its age. Our best witness to the imperialism of the age dominated by

Pompey and Caesar is Cicero. His own thoughts and words on empire are lucidly discussed in Catherine Steel's *Cicero, Rhetoric and Empire* (Oxford, 2001). Most ancient writers present this crisis as a Roman tragedy, but they shared it with the entire Mediterranean world. Liv Yarrow's *Historiography at the End of the Republic* (Oxford, 2006) is a subtle and original exercise in looking in on the Republic's collapse from the edge of empire.

X

THE ENJOYMENT OF EMPIRE

Since we now rule that race of people among whom civilization did not just arise, but from which it is believed to have spread to all other peoples, we have an obligation to pass on its benefits to them, just as we once received it from their hands. For I am not ashamed to say, all the more so given my life and achievements are proof enough of my energy and seriousness, that whatever I have accomplished I owe to the learning and culture which have been passed down to us in the classics and philosophy of Greece.

(Cicero, *Letter to his Brother Quintus* 1.1.27)

The Last Generation of the Free Republic

The Romans who lived between the dictatorships of Sulla and Caesar inhabited what was, in some ways, a new world. Italy was now a peninsula full of Roman citizens, a privileged and prosperous land surrounded by subject provinces. The imperial reach of the Roman people was expanding faster than ever before. Their city was transformed year after year, marble monuments like the Theatre of Pompey rising above the ancient tufa temples. The chief beneficiaries of imperial expansion were the Roman aristocracy.¹ They were richer than ever before, and with their wealth they created a life of luxury for themselves.

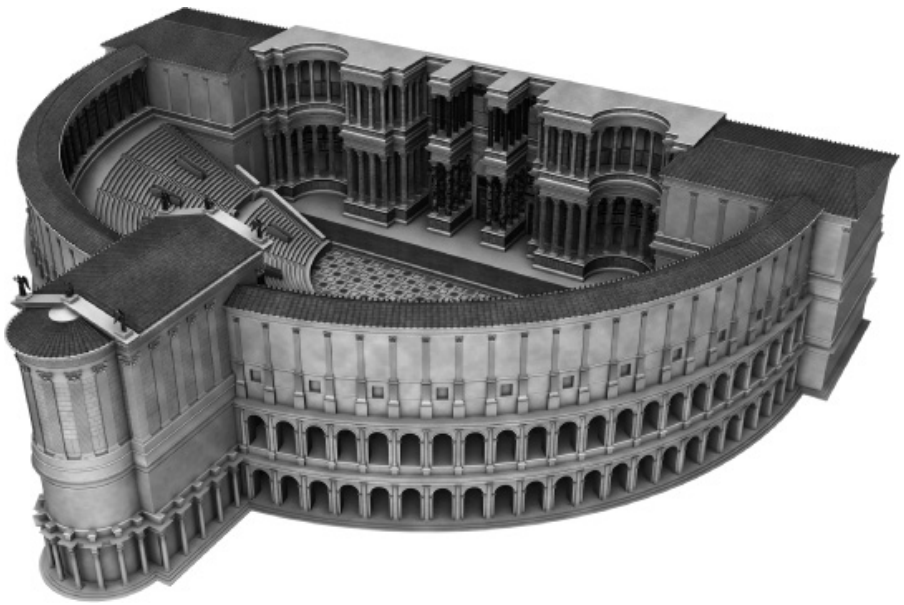


Fig 11. The theatre of Pompey

Roman aristocrats returned to Athens soon after Sulla's sack, in search of education and high culture. A shipwreck, found a century ago by sponge divers off the island of Antikythera at the southern point of Greece, revealed a cargo of extraordinary statues and other treasure en route for Italy. Excavations of the luxurious villas constructed in the last century BC show the probable destinations of such cargoes. Ancestral mansions in the city had been rebuilt on ever more lavish scales since the sixth century, but from the later second century Roman aristocrats had begun to expand their property portfolios. Cicero was far from the richest of senators, but even he owned eight villas. The Roman elite acquired summer retreats in hill towns like Tivoli and Tusculum, and coastal villas within easy reach of the city. The movement to invest the profits of empire in viticulture and other intensive agriculture had led them to acquire great farms in Umbria and Tuscany. By the last century some at least, like Settefinestre, were also pleasant residences. Most gorgeous of all were the sea-front palazzos along the Bay of Naples.² The richest villa owners created retreats perched over the sea, equipped with elegant quarters for leisure, dining rooms for summer and winter use, private baths and fishponds, libraries and gardens adorned with artworks imported from the Greek world. Among the bronzes and marbles there were human treasures too, scholars and craftsmen. Some had come to Rome in chains, others had been attracted by the gifts bestowed on architects and artists, teachers and on writers of all kinds, philosophers, poets, critics, and historians among them.³ Roman

moralists remained anxious about luxury: but what counted as luxury was different now. Building a temporary theatre out of imported coloured marbles and then reusing them in your urban house was luxury. Cicero considered that he lived a life of moderation.

This generation was the same one that witnessed the collapse of their civil society. Many of those who owned the grandest villas would perish in civil wars; indeed some of these rich houses changed hands rapidly when their owners were proscribed. But this same elite—through a mixture of patronage and its own creative activity—presided over the formative period of Roman intellectual culture. And for once we can observe it in vivid detail, partly because of the splendid residences and monuments they built, but also thanks to the survival of the writings of Marcus Tullius Cicero and his contemporaries.

An Imperial Life

Cicero was born in 106 BC into a wealthy Roman family from the town of Arpinum in the Volscian hill country just over 100 kilometres (just over 60 miles) south-east of Rome.⁴ Arpinum had been ruled by Rome since the late fourth century and its inhabitants had been citizens long before the Social War, but this municipal background only made Cicero keener to fit in and conform. His politics were also much more traditional than blue-blooded radicals like Julius Caesar and the Gracchi brothers. Educated in Rome, he did his military service like any other young equestrian, travelled and studied in Greece, and began to take on legal cases. Roman orators did not charge fees for representing clients, but if successful they won gratitude that might be converted into future support. Besides, legal cases involving the aristocracy in this period were often politicized. Cicero's first cases were chosen to align himself with critics of the dictatorship of Sulla. The tactic paid off and he was elected as a quaestor for 75 BC: this was a junior magistracy but one that made him a senator for life. Being the first in his family to win an office of this kind meant he was, like Marius before him, a *novus homo*, a new man. This was not uncommon. The Senate was always open to new blood, even when proscription and civil war had not created vacancies.⁵ But being a new man was a position he could exploit throughout his career, representing himself as an underdog when it suited. The quaestorship took him to Sicily for first-hand experience of Roman provincial rule. Many of his early cases involved charges of corruption on the part of governors. Some he defended, others—like Verres—he prosecuted.

Elected praetor in 66 BC, Cicero spoke persuasively in favour of

transferring the command against Mithridates to Pompey. By 63 he was consul—a significant achievement—and he had to deal with Catiline's attempted coup. Supported at the time in his decision to execute the alleged conspirators, this came back to haunt him, and he was briefly exiled in 58. The consulship was the high point of his influence. Roman politics in the 50s revolved around the alliance between Pompey, Caesar, and Crassus. Cicero was unwilling to support them, and tried (unsuccessfully) to break up their pact. For a while, he was even forced to leave Rome to serve as governor of Cilicia. During the civil war between Pompey and Caesar, he attempted to remain neutral; eventually he chose Pompey's cause. Caesar's forgiveness placed him under obligations that effectively drove him out of public life until after the latter's murder on the Ides of March 44 BC. The bulk of his philosophical writing was carried out in the late 50s, when he had been frozen out of politics, and in the last year of Caesar's dictatorship and the eight months that followed. Cicero was bitterly disappointed that the assassination of Caesar did not restore traditional Republican freedoms as he saw them. Fiercely opposed to Mark Antony, he tried to build up Octavian as a counterweight. But when the two formed an alliance, Cicero was proscribed and he was hunted down and killed in December 43 BC. His hands and head were displayed in the forum from the speaker's platform, the Rostra, as a grim warning of the dangers of free speech.

Like all his generation, Cicero pursued his career in the shadow of empire. Empire and the Social War had made the propertied classes of Roman Italy into the elite of an imperial nation.⁶ Modern empires typically recruited their administrators from the educated middle classes. Participation in running the empire guaranteed them a better lifestyle, and more status than they could hope to enjoy at home. They approached the business of empire as clerks and bureaucrats, ruling by regulation and memorandum. Many became professional servants of empire, and some never returned home. Rome's empire was different. Aristocrats played the leading role in running it, with the help of their family members, friends, and slaves. The conduct of governors, generals, and procurators was guided by principles of ethics and custom rather than by standing orders and protocol. And their eyes remained fixed on the network of friends and relatives back home; they did not 'go native'.

Cicero conformed to this pattern perfectly. Roman governors might display justice and prudence, energy and competence, but there is little sense that any preferred their foreign postings to life back home. What they hoped to bring home were a good reputation (*fama*); the support and gratitude of Roman traders and prominent tax farmers or other aristocrats; maybe even some support from provincial cities or

grandees; and of course money. Theft, menaces, and accepting bribes were illegal, but there were other legal if dubious ways of extracting money from provincials, such as money lending at ruinous rates of interest. Cicero evidently tried to imitate famous governors like Quintus Mucius Scaevola the *Pontifex*, proconsul of Asia in 94 BC and author of an exemplary edict laying down the principles of good government. But in the changed conditions of the 50s BC, this resolution brought Cicero only grief.

Cicero experienced the empire from many perspectives.⁷ As a junior magistrate with financial responsibility in Sicily, he was alternately admiring of and frustrated by the Greek cities of his province. Later in life he had to experience the necessary compromises of a governor, forced to balance the interests of justice with those of his powerful Roman friends back home. As an advocate, he had occasion to speak passionately on behalf of Roman colonists and allies against corruption, and also to urge jurors not to believe non-Roman testimony over the assurances of governors who were noble and Roman. If his orations *Against Verres* are savage condemnations of the abuse of power, his speeches in defence of the governors Flaccus and Fonteius pander to the grossest ethnic prejudices. Most of the issues that confronted him as a politician also seem (to us) to derive from empire. One set derived from the destabilizing effects of massive influxes of wealth, unevenly distributed between rival politicians and social classes, so fuelling the bribery and debt that lay behind Catiline's coup and the power of Crassus, Pompey, and Caesar. Other political crises were a product of the Republic's failure to maintain security in the Mediterranean.

Cicero did not see things quite this way. In his orations—both in the courts and in the Senate—he repeatedly focused on the personal deficiencies (or merits) of the individuals involved. The interests of the Roman people would be best served if men like Verres were punished as they deserved, and men like Pompey were given the power they needed to use their exceptional talent in the public interest. Cicero saw no necessary conflict between the interests of the Roman people and those of their subjects. One passage of his treatise *On Duties* claimed that before Sulla, Roman rule over her allies had been more like *patrocinium* (patronage or protection) than *imperium* (imperial rule):⁸ there was no reason why that change could not be reversed. An open letter to his brother Quintus, ostensibly offering advice on his governorship of Asia, admitted the tensions that might arise between subjects and tax farmers, but recommended simply that all parties be urged to behave well.⁹ The idea that some people were natural rulers and others naturally subjects was as old as Aristotle's notorious justification of slavery. Besides, in *On Duties*, Cicero argued

that the ethical course was always in fact the most expedient one. The problems of the Republican empire derived from moral deficiencies, not fundamental conflicts of interest or systemic failures. They demanded (no more than) a moral solution.

We might make two kinds of objection to this. First, there is a striking lack of analysis of structural problems. Was it not obvious that contracting out the collection of state revenues would lead to short-termism and abuse? Was it not clear that raising very large armies without any provision for their ultimate demobilization would cause problems? The answer to both questions must be yes, if only because these problems were not long after conceived and solved in exactly these terms. Under the Principate the duty of raising tribute was largely devolved to local authorities: they were perhaps no less rapacious, but did have a long-term interest in the stability of their own regions. From Augustus, soldiers were recruited for fixed terms, were discharged individually rather than by detachment, and a military treasury was established to fund their demobilization. It is impossible to know whether Cicero *could* not see these problems, or simply would not.

Second, Cicero's concern for the subjects of empire falls a long way short of an imperial vocation for another reason. It seems clear that Romans of Cicero's day had very little concept of empire in a modern sense.¹⁰ One corollary was that subjects and foreigners were treated in much the same way. Both groups, for example, might send embassies, both might be subject to commands, neither had a recognized stake in the Roman state, or a claim to be consulted by it. Romans ruled well because they owed it to their nature to do so, not in respect of the rights of others. The term *imperium* was not used in a territorial sense until Augustus' reign: until then it meant command and the power to do so.

Cicero is not our only witness to Republican imperialism, even if he is our best one. If we compare him to other writers of the period it is possible to see how conventional his views were. Sallust, writing history in the 40s, also saw the rise of Rome as accompanied by a collapse in morality, and attributed both war in the periphery and conflict in the centre to the moral deficiencies of Rome's rulers.¹¹ Livy, writing a little later, seems to have told a similar story. Cicero perfectly expresses the ideological stance of the Roman elite, one that was determined not to see a clash between their own desires and the interests of the state, or between Roman interests and global justice. This did not mean they could not entertain the idea that Roman rule was brigandage on a large scale. Sallust fictionalized a wonderful letter sent by Mithridates to the Parthian emperor, condemning Roman imperialism.

Do you not know that the Romans have turned their arms in this direction only after Ocean put a limit to their western advance? From the beginning of time they have possessed nothing they have not stolen, their home, their wives, their lands, their empire. Once a group of wanderers without kin or homeland, their city has been founded as a plague for the entire world. No law, human or divine, can prevent them attacking allies and friends, neighbouring peoples and distant races alike, poor and rich without distinction. Everything that is not subject to their command they treat as enemies, and kings most of all.¹²

The deft inversion of Rome's own myths of origin—Romulus' asylum, the Sabine women, and the Trojan settlement of Italy—and verbal allusions to Varro and others, reveal this as a pastiche aimed at Roman readers. It seems they enjoyed these travesties of empire, since Tacitus and imperial satirists also produced anti-Romes of this kind. Yet a belief in the essential justness of Roman rule was essential to maintain the divine mandate. What emerge from all these texts are the first signs of a universalizing ideology. The idea that Rome was patron of the entire world is one example, the comparisons with Alexander and the use of geographical imagery to sum up the empire are another.¹³ For Cicero and his peers this universalism was not simply a matter of politics. It also formed part of an impulse to shape not just a Roman, but also a universalizing, view of classical culture.

Greek Intellectual Life in Rome

Cicero's generation did not create either Latin literature or the idea of a distinctive Roman educational canon, but they fixed both in what would become their classical forms. Like most peoples of the ancient Mediterranean, Romans had lived for centuries in a world where culture meant Greek culture. The first works written in Latin were intended for performance—the plays of Plautus, the hymn of Livius, the speeches of Cato.¹⁴ From the beginning of the second century BC, a few historical and antiquarian works were produced in Latin: Cato led here as well. Yet many Roman authors continued to write in Greek, and philosophy and rhetoric, geography, medicine, and science were accessible only to Greek readers. We have little idea how many Romans were even interested in any of these subjects apart from philosophy before the middle of the second century BC. The creation of a comprehensive and self-sufficient Latin literary culture began in the 60s BC.¹⁵

The issue was not access to Greek knowledge. There had been Greek cities in central Italy since the archaic age, and the influence of the imports, images, and ideas they brought was in some senses ubiquitous. The ancient cities of the Aegean were also easy to reach. Pictor travelled to Delphi and Cato must have had access to many

Greek books when writing his account of Italian *Origins*. The first Latin epic poets were well aware not only of Homer, but also of the many later Greek critical and philosophical commentaries on his work. During Polybius' long exile in Rome and his subsequent voluntary residence there, he had used the library of the kings of Macedon, brought back as plunder by Aemilius Paullus after the battle of Pydna. The fact that Paullus brought the library home suggests an interest in Greek scholarship as early as the early second century. Probably this interest was not new.¹⁶ By the middle of the second century some Greeks seem to have realized the Roman elite was especially interested in philosophy. Athens sent an embassy to the Senate in 155 comprising the heads of the Stoic, Epicurean, and Peripatetic philosophical schools. Paullus' son, Scipio Aemilianus, was the patron of not only Polybius but also of the Stoic Panaetius of Rhodes. Both scholars spent time with him in Rome, and accompanied him on his travels. But the total number of Greek scholars actually resident in Rome remained few until the Mithridatic Wars. Perhaps the same was true of the number of Romans who were genuinely interested in what they had to offer.

Things began to change in the late second century. One sign of a new interest in things Greek is a new interest in the Bay of Naples, where the cities of Cumae and Naples were the closest Greek cities to Rome.¹⁷ Rome had created a cluster of colonies in Campania in the 190s. Anecdotes show some members of the Scipio family already had homes there in the early second century. Yet the first villas described as really spectacular date to the start of the last century BC: Marius' Campanian retreat, built in the 90s BC, is one of the first certain examples. By the 60s and 50s the coastline was covered in those extraordinary pleasure complexes, images of which survive in Pompeian wall paintings and which have left flamboyant archaeological traces. The Emperor Augustus spent what were in effect vacations in the area, reserving for it Greek games, entertainments, and dress, in contrast to the rather sterner Roman traditionalism he displayed at home. Tiberius' island retreat on Capri—perhaps because access was so difficult—attracted various stories of tyrannical cruelty and depravity. The Bay of Naples became imperial Rome's Greek alter ego.



Fig 12. One of the fresco wall paintings in the *cubiculum* (bedroom) from the Villa of P. Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale

Young aristocrats were now regularly sent to be educated in the ancient cities of the Aegean world. Athens was the key destination but there were also many visitors to Rhodes, which had become a major centre for education in rhetoric and philosophy. Both cities already drew young men from other Greek states. Now young Romans began to join them. Cicero and his brother were both in Athens in 79 BC listening to the lectures of the great Academic philosopher Antiochus of Ascalon, a client of Lucullus. They were both in their mid-twenties. They then went on to visit Rhodes and Smyrna. Julius Caesar studied on Rhodes a few years later. Some of these visits seem timed to avoid difficult political situations at home, and some probably also served to remove wealthy young men from the temptations of the city. But they left a lasting impression. Cicero's reminiscences of his youthful discovery of Greece evoke something of the Grand Tour of classical and Renaissance sites in Italy undertaken between the late seventeenth and the early nineteenth centuries by wealthy Europeans

as a final stage in their cultural education.

Summers in Campania and educational trips to Greece cast Rome in a new light. Roman writers of Cicero's age were acutely aware that when they entered a library almost all the books were in Greek. Most of the best libraries in Rome had once belonged to Hellenistic kings. Cicero and many others used the library set up by Lucullus in his retreat in the hill town of Tusculum.¹⁸ Greek scholars as well as Roman ones made use of his collections. Mudslides from the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 69 buried one elegant Herculaneum mansion, now known as the Villa of the Papyri after a great collection of philosophical works recovered there. The villa probably belonged to Calpurnius Piso, Caesar's father-in-law, who was consul in 58 with Gabinius as a colleague. The long lines of its ornamental ponds flanked by bronzes, and its lavish marble architecture, were reproduced by J. Paul Getty in Malibu in the 1970s, and have now been recreated again with loving digital reconstruction.¹⁹ Its library of philosophical works was a relic of the long residence there of the Greek polymath Philodemus of Gadara, who wrote on aesthetics and literary criticism as well as Epicureanism.²⁰

Vitruvius' manual *On Architecture* confirms what the Vesuvian villas suggest, that the Roman rich deliberately incorporated in their residences spaces designed to evoke Greek culture and these were often designated by Greek names: the *oecus* was a Greek dining room, the *peristylum* a Greek garden, the *bibliothēke* the regular term for library. Many of these rooms and terms did not correspond very closely to what archaeology shows actually existed in contemporary eastern Mediterranean cities such as Athens and Ephesus. Romans were not trying to recreate a contemporary Greek world in Italy. Cicero's retreat in Tusculum included two areas he called *gymnasia*, adapting the terms from a characteristic Greek institution dedicated to exercise and the education of elite males. One he named the *Lyceum* after Aristotle's school, the other the *Academy* after Plato's. A series of letters survives in which he asks his friend Atticus to try and obtain suitable Greek statuary to decorate these spaces.²¹ No doubt his villa near Puteoli had many Greek spaces too. But there was also the sternly Roman *domus* on the Palatine, and probably the Tusculan villa had more Roman spaces for other aspects of his life. He and his peers were not trying to become Greek so much as to incorporate a carefully selected portion of Greek culture into their own lives.²²

Cicero's correspondence mentions many other Greek writers who lived for decades in Italy as guests of the Roman aristocracy. They came not only from great eastern centres like Athens and Rhodes and Alexandria, but also from Greek cities in Bithynia and Asia and even Syria. From wherever, in fact, Roman generals had passed by. A few

taught, but many were resident scholars, creating for their Roman patrons an air of culture, in the same way as did the laid-out gardens with their covered walks for philosophical discussion among bronzes images of gods, mythological figures, philosophers, and kings. Greeks in Rome accommodated themselves to this selective appropriation of their culture. The prefaces of a number of Greek works composed in this period praise the generosity of their Roman friends. The historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus presented himself as an admirer of the Romans: he regarded the similarities between some Roman and Greek institutions and between the Latin and Greek languages as a sign that Romans were Greek in origin. Gabinius brought Timagenes of Alexandria to Rome as a captive in 55 BC. Freed and honoured he became for a while the house guest of Augustus himself, but had a reputation as a ferocious critic of Rome. He was reported to have said that the only thing to regret about the many fires suffered by the city was that damaged buildings were always replaced on an even more lavish scale. Eventually he moved on to the home of Asinius Pollio, creator of one of the first public libraries in the capital. Other kidnapped Greeks seem to have adapted more easily. Tyrannio of Amisos, brought back as a captive by Lucullus, was freed and patronized by Pompey. He became a friend and intellectual mentor of Cicero, Caesar, and Atticus and taught grammar and criticism in Rome. Greeks as well as Romans came to study with him, as they did with the medic Asclepiades of Prusias. Poetry was transformed as well as prose. Parthenius of Nicaea, captured in 73 BC during a war against Mithridates, was fêted in Rome and inspired a new generation of Latin poets including Cornelius Gallus and Catullus. Latin poetics would remain preoccupied with love poetry and mythological themes throughout the reign of Augustus and beyond. Then there were the visitors, some at least celebrity academics on lecture tours. Poseidonius of Apamea and Artemidorus of Ephesus visited Rome and some of the western provinces giving lectures and gathering material for their histories and geographies. The cumulative influence on Roman culture was enormous.

Greek scholars always needed patrons. During the third and second centuries they found them in the royal courts of Alexandria, Pergamum, and Syracuse, but in the first century they came to Rome. A key part was played by the generation of Romans born in the last years of the second century BC. They were the first to make the Bay of Naples their playground—half Las Vegas and half the Left Bank of the Seine—and the first to have travelled in their youth in the Aegean world to study in the ancient cities of Greece. A few even lived there for long periods. Cicero's friend Titus Pomponius lived in Athens for so long he acquired the nicknamed 'Atticus', and Verres fled Cicero's

prosecution to live in exile in Greek Marseilles. Tiberius would spend years on Rhodes during a period when he was out of favour at the court of Augustus. When campaigns in the east, or simply their own wealth, gave them the chance to bring Greek intellectuals to Rome, they grasped the opportunity, just as they filled their boats with Greek bronzes and hunted down copies of rare Greek books. They knew Greek philosophy well enough to identify themselves by school: Cicero the Academic, Caesar the Epicurean, Brutus the Stoic, and so on.²³ They dropped Greek quotations and words into their private letters and conversations.²⁴ But the clearest sign of their engagement with Greek culture is the determination of some of that generation to create a matching intellectual culture in Latin.

New Classics for a New Empire

Cicero, in his introduction to the *Tusculan Disputations*, is quite explicit that his philosophical works formed part of a conscious project to supply a set of Latin classics in each of the major genres invented by Greeks.²⁵

Those subjects which deal with the correct way to live—the theory and practice of knowledge—are all part of that body of wisdom that is called philosophy. This I have decided to explain in a work written in the Latin language. Philosophy, to be sure, may be learned from books in Greek, or indeed from Greek scholars themselves. I have always thought that our writers have always proved themselves better than the Greeks, either by finding things out for themselves, or by improving what they have borrowed from them. Obviously this applies only to those fields of study we have decided are worthy of our efforts.²⁶

The *Tusculan Disputations* form a part of a mass of mainly philosophical writing Cicero produced under the dictatorship of Caesar, when he felt he could neither support nor oppose the man who had enslaved the Republic but spared his own life. Tusculum was the site of Cicero's philosophically themed retreat; there he entertained younger senators who shared his political and cultural interests. Many of the works he produced are dramatized as dialogues, recalling Plato's accounts of Socrates debating with his students, but also presenting the Roman elite at their ethical and cultured best. The *Disputations* is in fact dedicated to the same Brutus whose ethics would have such a bloody outcome. Cicero opens by praising the practical morality of the Romans, relative to that of the Greeks, and goes on to argue that although the Greeks may have preceded Romans in many fields, once Romans took up the same pursuits they invariably eclipsed them. Discussion of various genres of Roman poetry moves on to oratory. Cicero's own work on oratory is presented as a key stage in the creation of a Roman intellectual universe. Now, he says, he will

move on to philosophy.

The preface is tendentious in all sorts of ways, and Cicero's history of Latin scholarship, like Horace's history of Latin literature contained in a letter ostensibly written for Augustus, has sometimes been taken too seriously. But it is perfectly true that this generation seem to have seen themselves as filling in the gaps in Latin writing and Roman knowledge. Cicero was not the only Latin philosopher. Lucretius' great Epicurean epic *On the Nature of Things* was nearly complete when he died in 55 BC. Cornelius Nepos and Atticus were engaged in historical research, trying to establish an absolute chronology for the Roman past, one that would allow key dates in Roman history to be coordinated with world (i.e.: Greek) history. Then there were Varro's researches into religious antiquities, Roman institutions, the Latin language, and much else. Nigidius Figulus wrote on grammar, on the gods, and science. Nepos wrote biographies of famous Romans. Roman intellectuals seemed sometimes to figure themselves as counterparts of the great figures of classical Greek literature. Cicero presented himself as the new Demosthenes, and thought of writing a Roman version of the *Geography* of Eratosthenes.

All this activity is sometimes presented as sign of cultural insecurity, but it might just as well be understood as fantastic ambition. Rome had surpassed the Greeks in warfare, why not in literature too? But when Cicero and his collaborators are read carefully it is clear they were not trying to create an alternative, parallel, and self-sufficient intellectual universe. They advocated an eclectic bi-culturalism, a cultivated familiarity with both languages (*utraque lingua* 'in either language' became almost a catchphrase), and when they described the moral and cultural superiority they sought it was not a *Romanitas* modelled on Hellenism, but *humanitas*, a term that embraces the sense of civilization and common humanity. Roman culture, in other words, had a universalizing mission. Just as Roman houses had Greek and Roman rooms and Roman religion had space for domestic and foreign gods, so the values that the last generation of the Republic proclaimed were bigger than either national culture. That made Roman culture, at least in aspiration, a truly imperial civilization.

Further Reading

A fascinating impression of the curiosity and energy of the Roman elite is conveyed by Elizabeth Rawson's *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic* (London, 1985). Rawson also wrote what remains the best and most rounded biography of Cicero, *Cicero: A Portrait* (London,

1975). Many of the studies she produced while working on these two books are gathered in her collected papers, *Roman Culture and Society* (Oxford, 1991). Ingo Gildenhard's *Paideia Romana* (Cambridge, 2007) offers a careful exploration of Cicero's engagement with the Greeks.

The material setting of Roman Italy is brilliantly evoked in Tim Potter's *Roman Italy* (London, 1987) and the special culture of the Bay of Naples in John D'Arms's *Romans on the Bay of Naples* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970). The cultural history of Rome is now the subject of Andrew Wallace-Hadrill's amazingly wide-ranging *Roman Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge, 2008). At its heart is an examination of how Romans constantly referred to Greek and Italian models as they grew into an imperial culture. Emma Dench's *Romulus' Asylum* (Oxford, 2005) explores some of the same terrain, showing the many different routes through which Roman identity was reformulated.



Map 4. The Roman empire at its greatest extent in the second century AD



KEY DATES IN CHAPTER XI

- 81 BC** Octavian emerges from the Actium campaign as victor of civil wars
- 27 BC** Octavian given the title Augustus by the Senate
- AD 14** Death of Augustus. The succession of Tiberius
- AD 41** Assassination of Caius (Caligula). Praetorian Guard impose Claudius as new *princeps*
- AD 68** Suicide of Nero leaves no Julio-Claudian heirs
- AD 69** Year of the Four Emperors, ends with Vespasian establishing the

Flavian dynasty

~~Assassination of Domitian, succeeded by Nerva~~

~~The reign of Trajan. Major wars against the Dacians and then the Parthians, spectacular building in Rome~~

~~Reign of Hadrian, withdrawal from Mesopotamia~~

~~Reign of Antoninus Pius~~

~~Reign of Marcus Aurelius (jointly with Lucius Verus until 169).~~

~~Beginnings of increased pressure on northern frontier~~

~~Anticlimax: plague sweeps westwards across empire~~

~~Reign of Commodus~~

~~Assassination of Commodus provokes short civil war, ending in victory of Severus~~

~~Death of Alexander Severus marks the end of Severan dynasty and the beginning of the military crisis of the third century~~

XI EMPERORS

In the beginning the City of Rome was ruled by kings. Lucius Brutus established freedom and the consulship. Dictatorships were taken up from time to time, the power of the decemviri endured for only a couple of years, the consular power of the military tribunes did not last much longer. The tyrannies of Cinna and Sulla were shortlived, the power of Pompey and Crassus quickly passed to Caesar, and the armies of Lepidus and Antony surrendered to Augustus who took control of the whole state, worn out as it was by civil war, with the title First Citizen (Princeps).

(Tacitus, *Annales* 1.1)

The Return of Monarchy

Rome had an empire before it had emperors. The first half of this book has told the story of how that came about. One city in competition with others, fighting to control first Italy, then the west, and finally the entire Mediterranean basin and more besides. Or as the Romans themselves most often saw it, one *people* winning leadership (*imperium, arche, hegemonia*) over the other peoples of the inhabited world. Romans imagined this as a collective effort: Senate and people, Rome and her allies, the men and the gods of the city working together. Only in the final stages did individual leaders emerge from the pack of Scipiones, Fabii, Metelli, Aemilii Paulli, and the other great families. Sulla, Pompey, and Caesar seem—with hindsight—like intimations of monarchy.¹ Great generals provided a coordination of resources and policy that empire badly needed. The emperors did all this even better, and they also imposed peace. The senatorial historian Tacitus, writing in the early second century AD (around a century and a half after the battle of Actium), satirically represented Republican government as a brief deviation within a grand narrative of a Roman monarchy. But there is no sign that he or any other senator of his age actually opposed the rule of the Caesars. Emperors had turned out to be a vital component of the Roman Empire.

This chapter tells the story of how the Romans stopped worrying and came to love their new kings, even if they could never bring

themselves to call them by that name. That tact mattered most for the Romans of Rome. Greeks were happy to use the word *basileus* (king), Egyptians treated them as pharaohs, provincials everywhere made the family name Caesar and the special title of Augustus, awarded Octavian by the Senate in 27 BC, into synonyms for monarch. The first emperor knew better than to stage an overt revolution, yet over the first three centuries of the empire monarchy comes out of the shadows. We still call the early empire the Principate, since the emperors also used the term *princeps*, first citizen. All the same, there is now a consensus that all the essentials of monarchy had been there right from the start: these included an inner circle of favourites, advisers, secretaries, and viziers; palace intrigues, because the palace was where decisions were made; central pooling of information and control of resources; a nexus of patronage centred on the court; and a hereditary principle of succession, even if it was a while before it could be acknowledged.

Like all monarchies, its history is one of struggles for influence at court, of intergenerational conflict, of tangled sexual and political rivalries, of actual and suspected plots. But it is also a history of remarkable stability. If it was largely true that (as one historian has put it) ‘Emperors don’t die in bed’, it was also true that the murders of many individual emperors seem to have done little to shake the system itself. That is why much of this chapter is concerned with the emerging institution rather than the admittedly colourful characters who occupied the throne. The narrative overlaps with that in [Chapter 13](#) which will consider the outward face of empire, especially war and diplomacy. That story will be one of two centuries of cautious consolidation and modest advance followed in the third century with a crisis that caught the emperors completely by surprise and from which it took the empire more than a generation to recover. The empire almost collapsed under the combined pressure of invasions from northern Europe and war with a rejuvenated and very aggressive Persian Empire. What survived was, in fact, a new empire. Its story will be told in [Chapters 15](#) and [17](#). But through all these transformations, the person of the emperor remains at the focus of our gaze, and it is appropriate to begin with the first and greatest.

Augustus

In August 30 BC, Octavian stood almost exactly where his adoptive father Julius Caesar had stood nearly eighteen years before: in Alexandria, contemplating victory amidst the corpses of his enemies. But the Roman world had changed in the decades since Pharsalus. Back in 48, Caesar had lamented the murder of Pompey, swearing he

would have spared him. Perhaps he would have done, just as he spared Brutus and Cassius after his victory over Pompey. Nearly two decades later the new victor was a very different animal. Antony and Cleopatra were both dead, each at their own hands. But it was on Octavian's orders that Caesarion, the boy Cleopatra claimed she had borne to Caesar, was executed. After wrestling with Antony for leadership of the Caesarian party, Octavian would tolerate no other heirs for Caesar. Egypt he took control of too, absorbing the last of the great Greek kingdoms into his empire. He would need the treasury of the Ptolemies to settle his and Antony's soldiers. Octavian learned from others' mistakes. He would not rely on terror and legislation to fix the state as Sulla had done. He would not imitate Pompey's actions in 62 BC by dismissing his legions. He would not forgive as Caesar had. He would not take the title dictator and sit around in Rome waiting for the assassins' daggers. He meant to rule.

Oceans of ink have been spilled debating the question of how Octavian escaped Caesar's fate. Was he cunning or lucky? He had enemies after Actium, to be sure, and perhaps there were plots too. Did he really face the same challenges? How different was the Rome he returned to rule and the ruling class he converted into his allies? Was Rome now so weary of civil war it would accept any alternative? Had the Senate been cowed by the proscriptions and the civil wars? Had the people really come to accept him as a god who had saved the state? These questions are not difficult to answer for lack of evidence: the long reign of Octavian/Augustus (forty-five years from Actium to his death) is one of the best documented in Roman history. The problem is the success of Octavian and his allies in presenting their version of history as the dominant narrative. The themes of renewal, moral rearmament, and recovery sponsored by the gods resonate in the poetry created by Propertius, Virgil, and Horace, in the monumental rebuilding of Rome and some major provincial cities, in the elaborate iconographic programmes of the Altar of Peace, of the Fora of Augustus and of Julius Caesar, and of the temples to Mars, Apollo, and other gods the first emperor set about constructing. It was also performed. It is difficult for us to imagine the experience of watching the great triple triumph of 29 BC, celebrating his victories in the Balkans, in the campaign of Actium, and in Egypt. But the spectators knew this meant the end of civil war. The same applies to the magnificent Saecular Games of 17 BC, ostensibly an ancient festival revived, but used by Augustus as another means to signal the end of one era and the start of the next. Some performances were more subtle. During the 20s BC Octavian gradually rebuilt his image in a series of carefully stage-managed renunciations of his power, each followed by new grants from the Senate. The focal point occurred at

two meetings in January 27 BC from which he emerged with the title Augustus, a vast province (essentially that half of the empire that contained armies) granted for ten years, and the right to govern through legates. During 23 BC he finally resigned the last of a series of consulships and received a grant of *imperium maius*, the same kind of command that had allowed Pompey and others to outrank governors in their provinces. In fact in almost all his titles and powers he was much more the heir of Pompey than of Caesar. The only *popularis* elements were the powers and inviolable status of a tribune. The people had festivals—bread and circuses in the famous phrase—but the power of the assemblies to actually choose magistracies or pass legislation withered away. Augustus passed his legislation via the Senate, appointed senators to all the major military and political commands, with equestrians taking on the lesser ones, chose some magistrates and reserved the right to veto appointments to others, determine the election of the most important priests. Without ever creating a formal constitutional position of emperor, he accumulated, through influence, persuasion, vast wealth, and the threat of overwhelming military force, a determining position in the state. On his death, the whole bundle of powers and almost all the titles were passed on to his successor. Back in the 20s his death was, of course, a long way off, although his frequent illnesses meant no one could count on it. But this gave him a long time to develop the role of emperor. The 20s were about survival, demobilizing armies, touring and securing the provinces, and establishing a delicate cohabitation with the Senate. Keeping physically away from Rome for much of the decade probably helped. A plot in 22 BC caused a momentary crisis, but by 17 BC and the Saecular Games he was as secure as he ever would be. During the middle part of his reign he initiated great campaigns of conquest. Peace was made with the Parthians in 20 BC, the standards of Crassus were returned, and with the east secure he was able to devote resources to the conquest of Europe. His stepsons Tiberius and Drusus led great armies across the Rhine and up and down the Danube. World conquest was almost certainly devised as a solution to the domestic problem of What did an emperor do? Up until a disastrous defeat in Germany in AD 9 the answer could be, the emperor leads Rome in the fulfilment of her historical destiny. Augustan art and poetry is full of images of world conquest, and the submission of India, Britain, and northern Scythia was confidently predicted. Victory abroad distracted from scandal at home, driven partly by struggles over who would be Augustus' successor. In the end it was to be Tiberius. No one else was left, alive or untarnished.

Tiberius already shared most of Augustus' formal powers by the time of the latter's death, but he still had to endure his predecessor's

final arrangements. A great dynastic mausoleum had been built in the Field of Mars not far from the Tiber. Over the years since its completion (in 28 BC) it had accumulated the remains of a number of those who Augustus had once hoped would succeed him, notably his sons-in-law Marcellus and Agrippa, and his grandsons Gaius and Lucius. Only the favoured were admitted: his daughter Julia was forbidden to lie alongside her husbands and sons, his granddaughter was also banned from burial within it, and a final grandson was murdered, allegedly on his orders, as soon as Augustus' death was announced to make sure Tiberius faced no possible rival from within the family. The ruthless Octavian had clearly survived beneath the benevolent figure of Augustus. In this Mausoleum the ashes of Augustus would lie. But first came the send-off.

On the news of Augustus' death the priestesses of Vesta produced his will, which had been left with them for safekeeping.² Tiberius and his mother, Augustus' wife Livia, were named as principal heirs of his vast personal property in a ratio of two parts to one. The will also detailed the customary legacies that Roman nobles made to their relatives, friends, and clients. But the scale was now rather different. Augustus included legacies to every single Roman citizen, and to every soldier in the Roman army. The will was supplemented by three other documents, codicils. One offered a balance sheet of the entire empire. It detailed where the soldiers were stationed and how many they were in each unit, how much money was in the treasuries, how much tax was owing, and to these lists were added the names of those of Augustus' slaves and ex-slaves who could furnish further details. This is a tacit statement of how far the coordination of the empire had progressed in the ninety years since Gabinus had first proposed that first exceptional command for Pompey against the pirates. It also reveals how Augustus managed the empire, through his private household, that is, relying on his own dependants rather than public slaves, senators, or equestrians. No other accounts had ever been offered. But the document was a display of openness, not an invitation to the Senate to take the reins. Augustus' slaves and clients were part of Tiberius' inheritance; he already had *imperium maius* and all the other powers that mattered.

A second codicil included instructions for Augustus' funeral. There would be a grand pageant through the city of Rome, one in which all the orders would participate alongside the members of his family. The funeral procession would make its way to a specially constructed pyre on the Field of Mars. On it was a tower from the top of which an eagle would be released at the moment it was ignited. The eagle would soar to heaven, carrying Augustus' soul with it. He himself would become a god, like Julius Caesar before him.

The third codicil was Augustus' account of his life, not his memoirs or autobiography, but the text for an epigraphic monument. It was to be inscribed on two pillars of bronze outside the Mausoleum. They are long gone, but many copies were made and set up all over the empire. The best surviving example is from a temple of the imperial cult at Ankara in central Turkey. The Greek heading reads as follows:

Translated and inscribed below are the deeds and gifts of the god Augustus, the account of which he left in the City of Rome engraved on two bronze tablets.

This precisely describes its contents in thirty-five succinct chapters, which list in exhausting detail the peoples conquered, the monuments built in the city of Rome, and the gifts given to all and sundry. It also offers a highly tendentious account of his role in the civil wars. The Latin original of the title had more nuance. Augustus is described by the term *divus* —deified— rather than the blunt term for god, his achievements are glossed as those by which he made the entire world subject to the will of the Roman people, and his gifts are explained as the sums he expended on behalf of the state and of the people. Saviour, conqueror, benefactor, patron, and a Roman who had outdone all his peers and all his predecessors. It is a longer epitaph than the one Sulla chose for himself, but maybe not so different.

Dynasties

Tiberius' accession in AD 14—long planned for and formidably resourced— went smoothly. This was the first in a number of crucial stages through which the charisma and standing enjoyed by Augustus personally become institutionalized into the role of emperor. Tiberius ruled until AD 37, efficient and cautious, but remote and unpopular. Much of the latter part of his reign he spent away from Rome, ruling the city via his praetorian prefect. There were crises but he survived them. AD 41 showed the dynasty could survive an assassination, that of Tiberius' successor Caligula. After Caligula's death the Senate had reportedly discussed a return to Republican government: the debate was still running when the imperial guard installed Claudius on the throne. As far as we know the issue was never seriously raised again. Nero's suicide in AD 68 left no obvious heirs, and a short civil war followed. It was the first in a century and it lasted less than two years. Governors in Gaul and Spain had been the first to rebel against Nero, and on his death installed Galba as his successor. But he failed to win over either Rome or the other armies and was murdered on 15 January AD 69, the year remembered as that of four emperors. Otho was backed by the Praetorian Guard, Vitellius by the German legions, and Vespasian by the armies of the Danube and Syria and the prefect

of Egypt. But after victory for Vespasian's party, the institutions of empire snapped quickly back into place and all seemed to continue much as before. It was as if Senate, equites, people, army, and provinces all felt a need for one man to hold the centre. A bronze tablet records a senatorial decree passed in December AD 69, and probably formally approved by the assembly shortly thereafter, which grants Vespasian a series of privileges, citing powers and rights granted to Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius as precedents. By the time it was issued Vespasian had no real rivals and the Senate and people no real choice, but it expresses the will of all sides for a restoration of the status quo before the civil war.

The events of AD 69 show the importance of the person of the emperor as a symbolic centre, as a focus of ritual and cosmological power. For Vespasian's candidacy was supported by heaven. Josephus, a rebel Jewish leader in captivity, predicted it; Vespasian waiting at Alexandria performed healing miracles; the goddess Isis supported his cause. Without an emperor the Capitol burned and there were rumours of Druidic curses. The world did seem to be coming apart. German auxiliaries and Gallic rebels dreamt of founding a new empire on the Rhine. The installation of the new Flavian dynasty (Vespasian's full name was Titus Flavius Vespasianus) immediately restored order to the world.

Descent mattered above all else. The title king continued to be avoided in Rome. But there can have been no doubt from the start that the Roman Empire was now a family affair. Not only did Augustus advertise himself son of the god (of the deified Julius Caesar, that is) but he covered the city in monuments named after family members and their spouses. The porticoes of Livia, Octavia, and Julia, the theatre of Marcellus, the baths of Agrippa joined the Julian and Augustan fora. That monumental idiom was maintained by his successors. Heirs were designated from his family, and the coming of age of his grandchildren was celebrated on the grandest scale. Poets and provincial cities soon got the idea: extravagant honours were paid to one imperial prince after another. The calendar of a military unit stationed on the Persian frontier shows many of these festivals were still being celebrated 200 years later. Consent to the hereditary principle is evident in the support given to otherwise very lacklustre emperors. Claudius, when raised to the throne by the Praetorians, had only his name and ancestry to recommend him. Many refused to believe Nero dead, and there were at least three pretenders claiming to be him. When Vespasian won the support of the eastern and Danubian armies for his bid for the throne it is very clear that one major recommendation was that he had two adult sons, Titus and Domitian, as potential successors. Despite the lack of any family

connection, Vespasian's formal imperial name was Imperator Caesar Vespasianus Augustus. And in an innovation the title Caesar was employed to designate Domitian as his heir.

Imperial women had their part to play too in the presentation of a dynasty. The wives of emperors were public figures, appearing in ceremonial, honoured by the Senate, people, and army, and often given religious roles.³ Augustus married his daughter to a series of potential heirs. Empresses were also the mothers of potential future emperors. Before her fall from grace, images of Claudius' beautiful young wife Messalina, carrying the child Britannicus, advertised the posterity of the dynasty. Caligula's sisters feature on his coinage and in portrait sculpture, associated with cardinal virtues.⁴ Agrippina the Younger was celebrated as Mother of the Camps. Livia was given honours by the Senate, before and after her death. Imperial women might be given extravagant funerals and consecrated after their deaths as *divae*, the female counterparts of the deified emperors. Provincial cities often had priestesses of the living empress.



Fig 13. The Empress Messalina and her son Britannicus, AD 45, Roman sculpture, marble, Louvre

The power of descent should not surprise. Aristocratic families had run Rome since the beginning of the Republic, and the family remained at the centre of the Roman social order. Any other kind of monarchy would have been harder to explain. The Flavian dynasty lasted until AD 96 when Domitian was assassinated. Again the imperial order snapped back into place, without even a civil war this time, and

Nerva became emperor. He was not a very successful one, but his adoption of the dynamic general Trajan avoided a less smooth transition. None of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, or Antoninus Pius had sons, and a virtue was made of the necessity of selecting successors from more distant relatives and connections. Yet nomination was always accompanied by adoption, and if one reads the official names and titles of the emperors, these awkward transitions are obscured. So Trajan ruled as Imperator Caesar Nerva Traianus Augustus, Hadrian as Imperator Caesar Traianus Hadrianus Augustus, and so on. Adoption was in any case a very traditional means by which aristocratic families renewed themselves. Polybius' friend Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus, who sacked Carthage in 146 and was the victor of Numantia in 133 BC, was in fact the natural son of Lucius Aemilius Paullus, the victor of Pydna, but had been adopted in childhood by Scipio Cornelius Africanus to ensure he had an heir. And testamentary adoption was the means by which Octavian (born Gaius Octavius) had become the son of Julius Caesar, in fact his uncle. Augustus had formally adopted his stepson Tiberius, and Tiberius adopted his nephew Germanicus. Imperial portraiture was fairly standardized and shows a concern to make Julio-Claudian princes show an exaggerated family resemblance.⁵ Adoption expressed continued belief in the importance of families and dynastic succession. So it was no surprise that given Marcus Aurelius did have a son, Commodus, he duly succeeded. His assassination in AD 192 did not result in an orderly replacement. After a couple of false starts, another brief civil war followed between the generals of the major armies. The war was almost a replay of the events of AD 69, with different armies backing their own candidates after the failure of the Senate of Rome and the Praetorians to create a local successor. The victor was Septimius Severus, who founded a dynasty that remained in power until AD 235. Severus' son now known by his nickname Caracalla was born Lucius Septimius Bassianus but eventually ruled as Imperator Caesar Marcus Aurelius Severus Antoninus Pius Augustus. These extravagant displays of continuity not only masked breaks between dynasties, but also asserted the stability of the order despite the frequency of assassinations. Caracalla himself was killed in 217, six years after he had murdered his co-emperor and brother Geta with his own hands. In fact, assassinations only rarely caused civil wars, and these were typically short affairs. From the point of view of provincial populations the replacement of emperors, whether by adoption or murder, probably mattered very little. However precarious the position of emperor might seem, the institution was very stable, and stabilized the empire as a whole.

That stability came to an end in the early years of the third

century. The story of how first of all renewed wars on the northern frontier, and then the rise of an aggressive new dynasty in Persia, created a military crisis that nearly destroyed the empire will be told in [Chapter 13](#). The restored empire that re-emerged in the 280s had new military, fiscal, and administrative institutions, a new coinage, and soon a new public religion. But it still had emperors. More than twenty emperors ruled—or tried to do so—between AD 235 and 284: to aristocratic historians some of them seemed almost as brutal and uncouth as the barbarians they spent most of their time fighting. But the emperors of the fourth century busily set about founding their dynasties just as the Severi had done, with fictive adoptions, the use of ancient dynastic names and titles. The dynastic principle actually grew stronger in the centuries that followed. When Theodosius I died in AD 395 his 11-year-old son Honorius, who had already been formally co-emperor for two years, took over the western Roman Empire. Rome had never had a child emperor before. The eastern empire was ruled by his elder brother Arcadius who was still in his teens. Both emperors struggled to assert themselves against their chief ministers and female relatives. This situation would have been unthinkable in the early empire, but is in fact an indication of how deeply entrenched the hereditary principle had become at Rome.

Emperors and Empires

Over the millennium and a half between Augustus' victory and the Turkish capture of Constantinople in 1453 almost every Roman institution disappeared or was utterly transformed. Popular assemblies petered out during the early first century AD. Elections were moved into the Senate by Tiberius, and although we hear of occasional formal acclamations by the people, their political role was over. When the masses gathered to cheer or jeer at emperors it was in the circus, the theatre, or the amphitheatre.⁶ The Senate survived much longer, but it progressively lost its functions: embassies were rarely received in the Senate after the first century AD, and during the second century laws began to take their authority from decisions of the emperor not from senatorial decrees.⁷ During the third century senators lost many of their roles in government. Most of this was accidental rather than planned, consequences of the diminishing time emperors spent in the city of Rome. The restored empire of the fourth century had a separate imperial bureaucracy and multiple imperial courts, one for each member of a college of emperors. Senates existed in Rome and Constantinople, but they had little role in government. The equestrian order, Rome's junior aristocracy, enjoyed a period of prominence in the early empire, supplying many military commanders, financial

officials, and even governors: it was the basis of new military and civil administrations in the late empire. But by the end of the fourth century it no longer existed as a separate entity.⁸ The public priesthoods were swept away by Christianity in the early fifth century. Roman citizenship was extended to provincial aristocrats, to former soldiers, to ex-slaves, and eventually to almost everyone in the early third century. As a result its value and significance declined. The city of Rome itself became marginalized as the emperors spent less time there. Constantine's new capital on the Bosphorus became a rival and then replaced Rome completely when Italy was divided up among barbarian kingdoms.

Yet the emperors survived. Emperors remained central through successive crises and fragmentations, through periods when there were multiple courts, beyond the fall of the west, and also the great losses of territory in the seventh century to Persia and then to the Arabs, and on, beyond the scope of this book, into the Middle Ages. Byzantine emperors preserved many of the court ceremonials of their predecessors, and so did the Frankish emperors who briefly supplanted them in the thirteenth century, the final Greek dynasties, and the first Turkish sultans.⁹ Great spectacles took place in the hippodrome of Constantinople before the new Muslim rulers of the city, just as they had before Justinian and Constantine, and in Rome before the Severi, Commodus, Vespasian, and all the other emperors back to Augustus. What made monarchy such a successful component of empire?

It helps to recognize that Rome was not unusual. If we consider other ancient empires, very few lasted for long without monarchy at their centre. The Chinese first emperor of the Qin dynasty (221–206 BC) did not replace a republic, but a series of rival kingdoms that occupied the basins of the Yangtze and Yellow rivers during the Warring States Period. One of the many things that united their populations was a notion of ritual kingship. The kings of the preceding Zhou period played a vital part in managing the ceremonial through which the favour of the gods was maintained. Ancestor cult and lineages were drawn into state worship of heaven. Chinese historiography starts with the annals of Sima Qian, written in the last century BC, more or less at the same time as Varro, Atticus, and Nepos were trying to construct a definitive chronology for Roman history. For Sima Qian, Chinese history began with the legendary yellow emperor, and various other dynasties were identified before the Zhou who ruled for much of the last millennium BC. The Zhou kings, and then the emperors from the Qin dynasty onward, set monarchy at the cosmological centre of the Chinese universe. Empire without the sons of heaven was unthinkable.¹⁰

The Achaemenid Persian emperor too ruled over an empire created from an amalgam of kingdoms, among them those of the Medes and the Persians, the Babylonians and Egyptians and Lydians. The title *shahanshah*, used in one variant or another by various imperial Persian dynasties until the Iranian Revolution of 1979, means king of kings. Persian monarchs increasingly elaborated a sense of their cosmic role, drawing on a wide variety of religious traditions.¹¹ The earliest empire in south Asia was that of the Mauryan dynasty (322–185 BC), which in some senses resembled Achaemenid Persia. It was created in the aftermath of Alexander's conquest of Persia, and in north-west India competed with the Seleucids for control of former Persian satrapies. This empire too was created by the conquest of a series of earlier kingdoms. Much less is known of the early empires of the Americas, but most of these seem to have had monarchies at their centre. The Inkas claimed a cosmological centrality similar to that of the Chinese sons of heaven.

A few general observations occur. First, monarchy was very common not only in early empires, but also in the earlier states out of which many were composed. When kingdoms are united to form an empire it would be bizarre to expect anything other than a grander kind of monarchy to emerge. The idea that an emperor is to a king, what a king is to a subject—the Persian notion of king of kings—is perhaps a fairly obvious one. Hierarchical societies grow by multiplying levels. Second, the emperors very often became the focus of rituals that set them at the cosmological centre of the universe. The details varied. Many ancient emperors were considered gods, or the children of gods, or (like the Roman emperors) gods in waiting. Others enjoyed special favour, or like Chinese emperors were privileged mediators between heaven and earth. Depending on how the local religion was organized, emperors might be priests or might be anointed by them. This personalized aspect of imperial universalism was often presented as traditional, the product of ancient ritual systems being modified to accommodate emperors, but some accommodations were extreme. Cyrus the Persian, Alexander the Great, Asoka the Buddhist monarch of the Mauryan dynasty, the Qin first emperor, and Augustus each has some claim to be a religious innovator. Rome was only unusual in not having been a monarchy from an earlier period, and in dispersing religious authority among a broader elite.

But it is not enough to show that most empires ended up with monarchs. The key question is What advantages did monarchy have for an ancient empire relative to other forms of government? One common answer—common since antiquity in fact¹²—is that monarchy is phenomenally powerful as an organizing force. Accounts

of the origins of civilization, from that of Lucretius to the theory of hydraulic despotism pioneered by Karl Wittfogel to explain why the earliest cities and states were so often based on irrigation agriculture, have stressed the importance of monarchs as the chief animators of society.¹³ Only monarchy, this theory goes, had the capacity to plan, coordinate, manage, and discipline societies into the collective projects on which they depended. Anthropologists have often seen chiefdoms as necessary precursors to states for similar reasons. State formation is associated with the emergence of legally based authorities, including magistracies; but they often owed their creation to charismatic individuals who had supplanted the traditional authority of elders and lineages. Students of ancient Greece are familiar with the idea that tyranny was in some sense a necessary midwife of political institutions. Cicero argued in favour of Pompey's great commands on the grounds that only under the leadership of such a man could the Roman people solve the formidable problems of empire. This sort of thinking was not confined to the elite. The price of grain collapsed when Pompey took responsibility for it in 57 BC, and in a similar crisis in 22 BC the Roman people tried to get Augustus to take on the role of dictator or consul for life. Romans of all ranks believed in the power of individuals much more than they did in the power of institutions.

A second strand of argument paradoxically finds the utility of ancient monarchy in its weakness. What monarchies do best, it is argued, is act as 'capstones' in complex political structures.¹⁴ Kings balance all the other elements, just as a capstone prevents an arch from collapsing, but they had little active power or freedom of action. Kings might arbitrate conflicts, and take decisions about matters over which it was difficult to achieve consensus. But their capacity to change things or take initiatives was weak. Economically and technologically ancient states were too feeble to give their chief executives much room for manoeuvre. Emperors were even worse off, since the size of their dominions meant it was very difficult to get reliable information on events happening far away, let alone to respond quickly. Emperors were forced to trust the generals, governors, and viceroys on the ground. Even at the centre of power the rituals of court and the intrigues of courtiers limited the emperors' initiative. The idea of the impotent king at the centre of a vast palace, utterly dependent on his slaves, eunuchs, ministers, and courtiers, is a romantic one, but it is not completely misleading.

More recently a third way of looking at the role of emperors has become popular. Emperors and kings, in this idea, are important as symbolic centres, as embodied focuses of ideological power.¹⁵ The person of the emperor, sometimes even his body, represented the

empire in a way that abstractions and institutions cannot. The religious dimensions are again obvious, but there are other elements too. As embodied symbols, emperors were more portable than ruling cities or monumental temples. Emperors could travel around their vast domains. Chinese emperors travelled constantly to participate in rituals at particular shrines.¹⁶ Macedonian monarchs often began their reign by visiting their armies and taking personal command of them.¹⁷ Even when the emperor was not physically present, his image and his name might be set up everywhere. Each pharaoh had his own cartouche, a hieroglyphic name enclosed in a lozenge-like shape, and it appeared on monuments all over the kingdom. Embodied authority offered other potentials for veneration. Imperial birthdays might be celebrated, and the rites of passage of other members of the imperial family. The notion of imperial families could easily be extended into imperial lineages and belief in the distinctiveness of royal blood. Ceremonial easily drifted into taboos on touching, addressing, looking at, or turning one's back on the imperial presence. Some emperors were believed to have the capacity to heal certain illnesses. It was believed medieval Byzantine emperors had to be physically whole, with the result that deposing an emperor was often followed by blinding and castration. Underlying all this was the idea that the emperor's body was something concrete and visible, unlike the empire as a whole.

All these ideas—the emperor as decision-maker, the capstone monarch, and the embodied presence—are helpful when it comes to thinking about the Roman emperor. Roman emperors did indeed resolve conflicts between Senate and people, if only by giving the latter bread and circuses and taking away their power to vote. More significantly, promotion into the various orders, appointment to magistracies and military commands, governorships, and priesthoods were all decided, or at least heavily influenced, by the emperors. Emperors managed the economy of honours, and were the ultimate patrons. Emperors were judges, made decisions over diplomatic matters and over the finances of the empire as whole. Even in the first century AD, the Senate was involved in almost none of these decisions.¹⁸

Equally, there was a sense in which the emperor was often more reactive than proactive, rather as the notion of capstone monarch implies.¹⁹ How far this is true in the case of Rome is a matter of fierce debate. Some historians see emperors as forever on the back foot, responding to requests more than issuing orders, limited by the enormous time it took to communicate with distant provinces, and by an imperial budget in which army pay swallowed around three-quarters of the total tax revenue. Other historians point to figures like

Trajan, who did initiate major new campaigns in central Europe and a great war with Persia, or Vespasian and his sons who remodelled the city of Rome after the dreadful fire of Nero's reign. Romans themselves certainly thought it mattered who was on the throne, and a good deal of effort was expended in trying to remove tyrants. Why bother if they were too weak to matter? Some of this is a matter of perspective, of course. Tyranny was most acute at home: maybe from the provinces tyrants and good emperors looked much the same. No one doubts that early empires were slow-moving enterprises, oil tankers rather than speedboats. Perhaps the best answer is that the Roman Empire was never easy to steer, and it was all too easy for weak rulers to allow ritual and routine and their closest courtiers to run the empire. That has certainly been true in other monarchies.²⁰ But some Roman emperors certainly ruled as well as reigned.

As for the emperor as an embodiment of empire, we find him everywhere. The names and images of the emperors were inserted into public ceremonies all over the Roman world.²¹ Annual festivals of the imperial cult, conducted by priests wearing images of the emperor on their crowns, were just the most prominent version of this. Gods shared their temples with the emperor, allowed his statues to join theirs on processions, and his name was incorporated into prayers and hymns.²² Emperors' faces were present in many other buildings. The city of Sardis in western Turkey built a vast gymnasium and bathhouse in the centre of the city, a monument to civic culture and civilized values. One room was devoted to portrait busts of the emperors. Coins from all over the empire, both the gold and silver issued by imperial mints, and the bronze change occasionally produced in Greek cities, bore images of emperors. Some even referred to key events, like a visit (an *adventus*) paid to the city in question. Armies too paid cult on the birthday of the emperor, kept his image with their standards, and celebrated the anniversaries of imperial princes. Over time more and more ceremonial surrounded the imperial presence. By the fourth century it was a special privilege to be allowed to kiss the hem of his purple robe.



Fig 14. The Roman ceremony of the Adventus depicted on a coin

Much of this evolved over time. There was no moment when the role of emperor was actually designed, indeed it lacked a label for a surprising time. Octavian drew on ideological support and titulature from all possible sources. *Augustus* had a helpfully vague sense of the divine, *tribunicia potestas* evoked a popular mandate, *princeps senatus* (senior member of the Senate) asserted respect for hierarchies of dignity as well as for the Senate's place in the state, a cluster of priesthoods and other titles alluding to magisterial power and personal heroism completed the package. Most of this was focused on the city of Rome. Out in the provinces he was king in the Greek world, pharaoh in Egypt, and goodness knows what to Gallic and Spanish tribesmen. The army hailed him as *Imperator*, the title awarded to victorious generals: in return he called them 'Fellow soldiers'.²³

Court and Empire

Historians of the imperial era complained that under the emperors you never knew for sure what was going on. Tacitus and Dio were senators, and they shared the prejudices of their order, but they were not completely wrong. Empire brought the end of public elections, the end of those meetings of the assembly at which orators competed to persuade the people to war or peace or to accept or reject controversial legislation, the end of *contiones*, those open meetings addressed by magistrates at moments of crisis, the end of political cases in the law courts, and the end of free speech in the Senate. Politics had once taken place largely in the public domain: that space was still there, but it was now for ceremonial. Decision-making took place elsewhere.

Politics had been palatialized. Emperors received information in

private and discussed matters of state with their friends and family. Friends might include senators and equestrians. Many emperors had close friendships with individual senators, and many of their relatives were members of one or other of Rome's aristocratic orders. The equestrian commanders of the Praetorian Guard were often very close to the centre of power. Sejanus and Macro were powerbrokers in the Julio-Claudian period, their second-century successors accompanied the emperor on campaigns, acting as effective viziers, and by the fourth century praetorian prefects were the senior figures in the imperial bureaucracy. But this was not the same as formally consulting the Senate or involving them in decision-making.

Besides, there were more sinister influences than the emperor's friends and the praetorian prefects. Aristocrats suspected—with good reason—that some emperors paid more attention to their slaves and ex-slaves than they did to senators. Claudius' attempts to give public honours to imperial freed-men were very unpopular. Later emperors kept their former slaves out of sight, appointing equestrians to be the public head of departments in which we may suspect freedmen still did most of the work. Imperial women were especially mistrusted. Not only were they believed to exert undue influence over the emperor. Their rivalries were said to divide the imperial house, especially when they were fighting over the succession prospects of their sons and husbands. Rumour abounded, along with all sorts of accusations. Even emperors could feel out of the loop. During one crisis the Emperor Claudius appealed to his most trusted freedmen. 'Am I still emperor?' It was a good question: his empress had divorced him and her new lover was planning to adopt their son.

The location of all this activity is a familiar one. It was the imperial court.²⁴ All monarchies have courts, and they fill vital functions, especially in traditional societies. Courts regulate access to the monarch, ensuring his role as decision-maker is deployed where it matters. Courts offer protection and services to monarchs. Where there are other powerful institutions—whether a senate, a church, or a parliament—courts defend the prerogatives of the monarchy within the state. Courts vary enormously in their nature. Early medieval kings made do with a warrior band, their family, and household servants. Rituals of entertainment and hospitality were elaborated over time and domestic servants, like the chamberlain, came to acquire new roles in government. The most elaborate courts were those of absolutist monarchs: at Versailles and similar palaces, ceremonial acted to integrate the kingdom, employing elaborate etiquette and ritual to create finely nuanced hierarchies of honour.²⁵

The Roman imperial court was a rather shadowy entity in the first century AD. Like the courts of medieval Europe it evolved out of the

household, but in this case out of the slave households of Roman aristocrats. Pompey and Caesar had depended on trusted ex-slaves and on their clients and close friends. It is no surprise that the emperors did the same. But to begin with there were no elaborate ceremonials and indeed no real palace to stage them in. The Palatine Hill, between the Roman forum and the circus Maximus, had been an area of aristocratic housing in the late Republic. Cicero, Crassus, and Antony were among those who had mansions there. Augustus acquired one of these houses and gradually extended his control of the hill, joining together houses, temples, and open areas to create what was in effect an imperial compound. More and more buildings were added by his immediate successors. From the Flavian period on a more coordinated complex emerged, with great reception areas and decorations in coloured marble.²⁶ One probable reason for the initial monumental reticence, in a city now full of spectacular marble temples and places of entertainment, was the lack of a formal description of the position of emperor in the first century. Augustus was a king everywhere but in Rome, and in many parts of the empire he was a god as well. Only in the capital did he have to exercise tact. The palaces of Macedonian kings had been rather grand structures, with great libraries and also hunting enclosures modelled on those of Persian emperors. Augustus did have a library on the Palatine but it was lodged in the temple of Apollo. The wilder entertainments took place on the Bay of Naples.

Institutionally too, the Roman court was not like that of the Seleucids, the Antigonids, and the Ptolemies. Roman emperors advertised their *civilitas*—their sense of civic virtue—yet the gap they really had to watch was not between ruler and subject, so much as emperor and aristocrat.²⁷ The problem was that not much separated the Caesars from other noble families. Macedonian kings had surrounded themselves with companions, young men of noble birth, but their empires contained no real aristocracies apart from the elites of the greater cities. Their courts were places apart. Medieval European kings tried only to marry the daughters of other monarchs, again to separate themselves from their nobility. Yet Roman emperors were members of the Roman nobility, no royal blood ran through their veins, and they were not an anointed lineage. The Senate included their close relatives and—since they never steeled themselves to marry the daughters of Persian emperors—the Senate included their relations by marriage as well. Most emperors had been through a senatorial career of some kind or other, and they knew the prejudices of the senators from inside. Claudius, interestingly, was an exception: perhaps this contributed to his giving freedmen public honours, including the right to wear badges of office associated with Republican magistrates. Clearly there were advantages too in the close

relation between emperors and the nobility. Emperors had a wider choice of marriage partners than if they had been restricted to royal princesses. More importantly ancient institutions like patronage, grand dinners (*cenae*) attended by friends of different status, and the notions of formal friendships and enmities could be adapted to new ends. When an emperor publicly renounced his friendship with a senator it was the equivalent of a death sentence. Emperors did well too out of the obligation on Romans to leave legacies to their friends. Yet despite this, Rome constrained the court and limited the freedom of the emperors.

And so they left. There was no single moment at which the emperors abandoned the city. Like other aristocrats they had always maintained residences outside Rome. From the first decades of Augustus' reign there had been times when their attention was required elsewhere. Tiberius spent the last decade of his reign outside Rome, mostly on Capri, partly on the Bay of Naples. Caligula and Claudius spent long periods in the north-west provinces, Nero spent a year and a half in Greece, and Domitian campaigned in Germany. When emperors left Rome, the court went with them. What this meant was that they were accompanied by a vast train of guards and slaves, who included personal attendants of every kind and concubines as well as secretaries, and the heads of the palatine offices.²⁸ Embassies, if they wanted a decision, had to track down the emperor wherever he was. From the second century AD there are more and more anecdotes concerning formal receptions on the frontier or in great provincial cities. Hadrian notoriously spent a huge proportion of his reign travelling, to Egypt and Africa, to Britain and the northern provinces, to Athens again and again. Marcus felt compelled to spend much of his reign in the Danube provinces, facing the barbarians.

Itinerant monarchy has often been a solution to the problems of communication in large states and early empires. Medieval kings sometimes moved their hungry retainers to wherever the food was rather than try to get provisions to a single capital. Some Chinese emperors toured shrines in annual cycle. Roman emperors moved to see the world and to get close to the problems that concerned them most at the time. Severus fought campaigns in Persia and Britain even after he was secure on the throne. Since they could govern from anywhere, it mattered little where they were based. True, they could no longer receive foreign visitors in the Senate, or go through the motions of discussing legislation there. But perhaps these were not disadvantages. The city of Rome remained a powerful symbol of empire, even though it played no really essential role in governing the empire.²⁹ Trajan and Hadrian and Severus and Caracalla all engaged in great building programmes there. Most third- and fourth-century

emperors had less time to spare and maybe less money, although that did not prevent them building themselves grand palaces in York and Trier, Sirmium and Split and Constantinople. Most later emperors visited Rome, but it was to look at past glories. Senators worked hard to keep lines of communication open, sent frequent embassies, and even had some of their children enter the imperial bureaucracy. But even as they elaborated the slogan *Roma Aeterna*, they must have known in their hearts that the centre of the empire was no longer the city, but rather wherever the emperor and his court happened to be.

Further Reading

Perhaps no period of Roman history has been subjected to the same scrutiny as the transition from Republic to Empire. The range of approaches and ideas can be sampled in three collections of papers, *Caesar Augustus* (Oxford, 1984), edited by Fergus Millar and Erich Segal; *Between Republic and Empire* (Berkeley, 1990), edited by Kurt Raafaub and Mark Toher, and Karl Galinsky's *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus* (Cambridge, 2005). There have been many biographies and assessments of Augustus. The most interesting is his own, the *Res gestae divi Augusti*, which has now been translated and equipped with a marvellous commentary by Alison Cooley (Cambridge, 2009).

Fergus Millar's *Emperor in the Roman World* (London, 1977) set the emperor at the centre of the empire, not as an animating force but as the point at which all other institutions met. It changed fundamentally how the history of the early empire was written. Brian Campbell's *Emperor and the Roman Army* (Oxford, 1984) is an essential supplement. How contemporaries understood and described their rulers is the subject of Matthew Roller's brilliant *Constructing Autocracy* (Princeton, 2001) and also, in a way, of Andrew Wallace-Hadrill's subtle *Suetonius* (London, 1983). Studies of the reigns of individual emperors are too numerous to mention: my favourites include Barbara Levick's *Tiberius the Politician* (London, 1976) and Anthony Birley's *Hadrian: The Restless Emperor* (London, 1997). Miriam Griffin's *Nero: The End of a Dynasty* (London, 1996) is at once the history of a key turning point, the portrait of an exceptional reign, and a study of the culture and politics of the court. It is also a great read.

The different circles around the emperor are surveyed in John Crook's *Consilium principis* (Cambridge, 1955), Paul Weaver's *Familia Caesaris* (Cambridge, 1972), and most recently in Tony Spawforth's *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies* (Cambridge, 2007),

which set Roman palace politics alongside those of Egypt, Persia, Macedon, and Han China. Another collection that deals with some of the same issues is David Cannadine and Simon Price's *Rituals of Royalty* (Cambridge, 1987). Imperial women are not the only subjects of Diana Kleiner and Susan Matheson's two collections entitled *I, Claudia I and II* (Austin, Tex., 1996 and 2000), but they gather together a fascinating collection of art historical, historical, and literary studies.

XII

RESOURCING EMPIRE

There were always kingdoms and wars in Gaul right up until you submitted to our laws. Although we have often suffered at your hands we have, by right of conquest, imposed only this one thing on you, with which we keep the peace. For peace between nations is impossible without soldiers, and there are no soldiers without pay, and no pay unless taxes are paid. Everything else we share with you.

(Tacitus, *Histories* 4.74)

The Political Economy of Tributary Empires

Who paid for empire? Like all imperial rulers, the Romans passed the cost on to their subjects. Romans knew this. Tacitus puts this pithy summary of imperial economics into the mouth of the Roman general Cerealis, in a speech aimed at dissuading the Gallic tribes of the Treveri and Lingones from joining the rebellion of AD 69. This was, indeed, the bottom line. By Tacitus' day the army devoured most of what the emperors raised in taxation. Put like this, the resourcing of Roman imperialism seems very simple. Yet the mechanisms employed were phenomenally complex and in constant evolution. Roman history is, in some sense, the story of unending struggles to balance the imperial budget. Perhaps this was true for all imperial states.

A comparative perspective indicates the tight constraints within which Rome had to solve these problems. Early empires were vast redistributive systems: the key resources on which they depended were land and manpower. Metals, timber, and hard stone were also important; correspondence between the Bronze Age kings of the ancient Near East was already often preoccupied with securing these precious resources. But the basis of all ancient economies was agriculture. Every early empire was, in the final analysis, funded from the agricultural surplus. Given that empires were built on inequality and were very large, they also depended on transport infrastructure. Empires typically spent on soldiers, functionaries, and imperial courts, and none of these groups was evenly distributed among the productive landscapes they controlled. There were not many options. Food could be moved to the consumers; the consumers could go to the food; or

else monetary systems could be devised which allowed states to pay in cash but required subject populations to sell surplus on the market to earn money to pay taxes, and consumers to use the market to obtain what they needed. Rome eventually used a combination of these, building roads and ports, levying taxes in kind and in cash, providing incentives for traders to bring their cargoes to the imperial capitals, and expecting provincial populations to supply armies and imperial courts on the move.¹

The Roman solution was therefore broadly similar to that employed by other early empires. Great infrastructure projects included the Grand Canal of China, begun in the fifth century BC and nearly 1,000 miles long by the time of its completion a millennium later; the Persian Royal Road that ran over more than 1,500 miles from Sardis to Susa; and the great Inka Road that ran 3,700 miles along the length of the Andes. Rome was especially fortunate in ruling an empire arranged around an inland sea. Moving the consumers to the food was less practical for empires than for smaller states. Early English kings could move their tiny courts around their little kingdom with relative ease, but empires required more complex systems. As a result most created imperial monetary systems with which to pay soldiers and state functionaries. Often this involved extending the uses of an earlier coinage, like the copper coins of the Qin kingdom that became the first imperial coinage of China, or Rome's silver denarii which in the course of the late Republic gradually replaced all the other precious metal coinage of the Mediterranean world.² Along with imperial coinages there usually went imperial standard measures. The Athenians' conversion of the Delian League into something like an empire was marked when the assembly issued a decree, probably in the mid-420s BC, requiring its allies to use Athenian coins, Athenian weights, and Athenian measures.³ The Achaemenid Persian Empire issued coinage and demanded some taxes be paid in coin: Hellenistic empires typically made more use of standardized monetary systems.⁴

Historians sometimes call this sort of political system a tributary empire, perhaps for obvious reasons.⁵ Tributary empires may be contrasted with conquest states, polities with institutions and ideologies geared to constant expansion. The Aztec political order depended on annual war, and it had state rituals that demanded constant supplies of war-captives for sacrifice. A run of years without victories would cause political collapse. When conquest states enjoy a sustained comparative advantage over their neighbours, periods of astonishingly rapid expansion might occur. Typically this involved not only rewards for the conquerors, but also means by which new members were recruited to their armies. Conquest states move like tsunamis across political landscapes. The Arab conquest that between

634 and 720 created a caliphate stretching from southern France to the Punjab, and the Inka conquest of the Andes in the century after AD 1438, were both movements of this kind. But this kind of forward drive cannot be maintained indefinitely. All conquest states are doomed either to sudden collapse (like the empire of Attila the Hun) or else to become institutionalized as tributary empires. Achaemenid Persia provides an excellent example. The empire was created between 559 and 522 by Cyrus and his son Cambyses, who together conquered the kingdoms of the Medes, the Babylonians, and the Egyptians: but their empire nearly collapsed in civil war until Darius I took control, creating a single currency, a tax system, a provincial system, and the Royal Road. Greek and Roman writers, spellbound by the horror of civil war, present the achievement of Augustus mostly in terms of establishing civil peace.⁶ But what really saved the empire from collapse was his success in stopping expansion, and consolidating it around those institutions that were already geared to the sustainable economics of a tributary empire.

Here too there were only a few fiscal options open to the rulers of tributary empires. Local rulers of various kinds could be recruited to act as agents of empire; tax farmers could be employed; or a tax-gathering bureaucracy could be created. Each method had its disadvantages. Depending on local elites meant surrendering some power over the provinces. A detailed comparison has recently been drawn between Rome's use of local elites and the situation in the Mughal Empire which extracted tax with the help of local *zamindars*, in the process conceding them significant autonomy.⁷ Tax farmers minimized the risks and costs of tax collection, guaranteeing the state a fixed income. But they notoriously had short-term interests, and were the least sympathetic to taxpayers. The long-term disadvantages of public-private partnerships of this kind are now very familiar to us: tributary empires also had to run the risk of revolts and protests stirred up by profiteering. A bureaucracy gave emperors much more control, but it came at a significantly higher cost, one that in the end would have to be recouped from the taxpayers.

The broad path of Rome's own journey through these tangled waters is simply stated. Roman expansion in Italy conforms closely to the ideal type of a conquest state. But already within the second century BC elements of more stable revenue extraction appear. Indemnities from defeated powers were replaced over that century by regular income, as former Hellenistic kingdoms were absorbed and other territory was won in the west. At first Rome depended on tax farmers: for a state already making the widespread use of public contracts that Polybius observed this was natural. But tax farming was impractical in some regions—notably Spain—and the appalling

behaviour of those who held the contract to collect Roman taxes in Asia was widely blamed for Greek support for Mithridates. Caesar entrusted the collection of land tax to the local elites of Asian cities, and that system became widespread during the early first century AD except in Italy, which was exempt, and Egypt where the bureaucracy used by the Ptolemies was preserved, and perhaps some frontier zones where the military acted as different kinds of bureaucrats. The early imperial system remained, however, exceptionally complex and tax farming continued to be used for many indirect taxes.⁸ The Augustan system had most consistency at the very highest level. Further down, there was little desire to tinker with systems that worked well enough, and only a few attempts to make improvements can be documented. All this changed in the crisis of the third century. The empire needed greater revenue at a time when the economy was for one reason or another weaker, and when local aristocracies were under unprecedented pressure. The result was that as part of the imperial recovery a new system emerged, with new taxes, a new coinage, and a centralized bureaucracy that lasted into the Byzantine Middle Ages.

Good Times and Bad Times

Fiscal systems can be seen as governmental responses to the economic activities of their subjects. Ideally they extract as much as possible without harming that activity. As Tiberius is said to have put it: 'I want my sheep shorn, not flayed.' The historical ecology of the Mediterranean basin and its hinterlands has been described already.⁹ The agrarian regimes of classical antiquity were essentially stable. Roman rule brought a few new farming techniques and a few new crops into some regions, but there was no revolutionary change. That 'normal' background had some built-in short-term instability, especially in the Mediterranean part of the empire where food crises were not unusual.¹⁰ More generally the ancient Mediterranean was characterized by highly localized cycles of boom and bust that drove peasant cultivators into strategies of crop-diversification, storage, and exchange.¹¹ Growth, where it took place, was the result of intensification. Where landowners had the funds and the desire we can observe them draining and irrigating; planting vines, olive trees, and gardens that would be more profitable than other crops; experimenting with new varieties of trees, with selective livestock breeding; improving the value of their estates by opening up clay-pits, building kilns and olive presses; constructing mill and storage facilities; and improving the transport facilities they used to get their surplus to market. Broadly speaking, the poor feared risk, the rich sought profit, but both pursued their ends by essentially traditional

means.

Yet long-term trends did emerge from this activity, trends with which the tributary empire had to deal. Work progresses apace on filling out the details of these trends, and especially on quantifying them.¹² Underwater archaeology has shown how the numbers of shipwrecks rose to a peak in the late Republican period, suggesting this was the period of greatest long-distance trade in the ancient Mediterranean.¹³ Over the same period Italian products, especially wine and ceramic tableware, are found all over the Mediterranean world, and beyond it too. From the early first century AD this evidence diminishes in volume. But there are indications of growth in the provinces, including the production of olive oil for export in North Africa and southern Spain, and the production of wine for local consumption in areas as varied as central France, the environs of Rome, and Egypt. Trade, in other words, boomed first, followed by the capacity to produce the same goods locally.¹⁴ New evidence for increased levels of mining and metal production has come from ice cores drilled through the Greenland ice cap. To judge from the levels of atmospheric lead and copper pollution attested there, the production of metals reached a peak in the early Roman Empire not repeated before the Industrial Revolution.¹⁵

For the most part, these changes were demand led. For example, one major stimulus to change was the spread of new styles of consumption across the empire, styles modelled on those of the Italian elites. Oil, wine, fish-sauces, textiles, bronzes, ornaments were all in demand among their provincial counterparts. Changes in consumption did not affect commodities alone. Teachers and potters and wall painters found employment in the provinces. Italian architects, engineers, and craftsmen were already at work on public buildings in the western provinces in the early first century AD.¹⁶ Once these skills had been taught to locals, quarries had been opened up, tile production had begun, and new carpentry techniques and design features were disseminated, we begin to see the transformation of domestic architecture, first in the cities and then in the countryside. Even more sophisticated engineering skills were needed to build aqueducts that powered monumental fountains and bathhouses, signs of new aesthetic and cosmetic sensibilities. All this was expensive, but if some of Rome's subjects were exploited more to pay for it, others might make money satisfying these new tastes.¹⁷

The greatest change in lifestyle in many parts of the empire was the growth of cities. The number of cities, their density, and the population of the larger centres grew all over the empire. Regions with only villages before Rome—inland Gaul and Spain, central Anatolia, parts of Egypt and the Balkans—experienced the greatest

growth. In a few areas, such as the Nile Valley, central Italy, and coastal Asia Minor, the proportion of non-producers who had to purchase their food crept up to as much as 30 per cent of the population. A large part of this growth was the consequence of the emergence of a small number of enormous cities at the top of the settlement hierarchy. The population of Rome reached around one million, and maybe ten other cities crossed the 100,000 mark. The urban system itself was changing, and in some areas small cities grew smaller as the larger ones swelled in size.¹⁸ But by most estimates the total urban population of the empire increased to a maximum around AD 200.¹⁹ Add to this the creation of a standing army that fluctuated between a quarter and half a million men, and it is clear where the new demand was coming from.

The Roman Empire promoted these processes accidentally and indirectly. By supporting urbanization and creating a standing army, the empire increased net demand. The models of civilized life that, under Roman rule, spread beyond the Mediterranean basin provided opportunities for merchants, craftsmen, and architects. Roman rule favoured the rich, and to the extent that they became richer their aggregate purchasing power increased. Standardized currencies and weights and measures, and investment in transport infrastructure—all designed to serve administrative and military ends—must have made trade easier. Law, common languages, and peace must also have made their contributions. Perhaps taxation played a part as well, stimulating landowners to produce greater surpluses, whether to be supplied in kind to the army or sold to pay taxes in case.²⁰

Intensification of this kind powered growth from at least the second century BC until some point in the third century AD. But then the process went into reverse. Cities shrank, investment in production seems to have diminished, and certain kinds of long-distance trade declined in volume. There are many uncertainties. In some cases a decline in trade reflected the growing success of local producers: cycles of production and consumption, in other words, were becoming more localized. Archaeological studies of some commodities, for example ceramic products from North Africa, suggest long-distance trade continued up to and beyond the collapse of the western empire. Africa remained a major exporter of grain too, even under the Vandals. Most indicators of economic decline also suggest a more dramatic decline in the north and west of the empire than in its southern and eastern provinces. The local economies of Syria and parts of Asia Minor actually seem to boom in late antiquity. Even less consensus exists about the reasons for the reversal of many of these trends, or indeed about the point at which this reversal began. The peak in shipwrecks is actually in the late Republic, and Italian wine

exports reach fewer and fewer regions in bulk from the same period. Could improvements in shipping or increased domestic consumption of wine explain part of this? The urban apogee, however, is around two centuries later.

Once the urban peak was passed, collapsing demand certainly did have a major effect. Many western cities, Rome included, shrank dramatically in population between 200 and 300 AD. The occupied areas of some cities in the north-west provinces were reduced to a quarter of their second-century maximum by the end of the third century. A few cities were even abandoned. Many cities must have contained vast areas of crumbling buildings and empty plots in the late empire, and quite a few huddled around a fortified castle in old monumental centres. Hardly any new urban monuments were constructed after the 230s anywhere. Rome itself dropped to a third of its size in the same period. All this must have affected the market for foodstuffs and textiles, for ceramics and fuel, and also the construction industry. The rich remained rich and some became richer: some of the most splendid rural and suburban villas were constructed in the fourth century all over the empire. But their spending alone could not absorb the mass productions that agricultural intensification had aimed at generating.

Many factors have been suggested to explain these changes. It is sometimes suggested that as economies became more and more regional, some parts of the empire had simply opted out of its expensive urbanized civilization. But it is difficult to see the articulation of alternative value-systems in the literary texts of the fourth century. Indeed they are often so nostalgic in tone that they are described as classicizing. The barbarian invasions of the late third century cannot have done this much damage, which is also evident in areas unaffected by those raids such as Britain. Nor had the empire (yet) increased the tax burden to the point where the productive base was under pressure, nor were the wealthy (yet) so wealthy that they had crippled public finances.

Recently explanations in terms of plague and climate change have been revived. Does each age visit its own fears on the fall of the Roman Empire? A terrifying plague certainly did grip the empire in the middle of the second century AD.²¹ Vivid descriptions have survived, including one from Galen, the leading physician of the early empire. It may have been smallpox, or measles, or a disease that no longer exists. It came from the east, brought into the Roman Empire by an army that encountered it while campaigning against the Persians in the 160s AD, and spread rapidly along the militarized areas of the Danube and Rhine and eventually reached Rome driving refugees (and at one point emperors) before it. But it is difficult to

estimate its effect on the long-term operation of the economy: comparative evidence shows plagues can have a range of effects, some even positive, on economic growth.²² The question of climate change is even less certain, and hinges on very large-scale estimation of fluctuations of mean annual temperature. If there was indeed a slight decrease in temperature around the middle of the first millennium BC, this could have affected agricultural productivity. Both these ideas see the high point of the Roman economy as resting on a rather fragile basis, and that thesis is genuinely difficult to assess in the current state of the data. And there are other alternatives. One strand of argument suggests that the ancient economy had reached its maximum carrying capacity even earlier, and that the growth of the last centuries BC was a final spurt generated by the incorporation of new regions into the Mediterranean system. It is difficult at the moment to decide between these hypotheses.

Whatever the reasons, the consequences of economic contraction for a tributary empire are clear. Indirect taxes tapped the profits of trade, auctions, and manumissions. If fewer of these took place, the revenue decreased. Direct tax was based on the land, but if land became less profitable there was a limit to what could be raised. This is, however, clearer to us than it was to them.

Harnessing the Ancient Economy

This picture of the economy that is emerging from the very latest research would have been incomprehensible to the Romans themselves. Their very practical understanding of economic activity did not include the use of predictive or descriptive modelling, they gathered little data from which they could have analysed trends, and ancient science had no concept of the economy as a separate entity. In that sense the emperors were flying blind as they designed and modified their tax systems.

But their solutions to problems were not foolish. When earthquakes devastated the cities of Asia, Tiberius remitted tax income for five years. When Augustus needed more money for the military he created new taxes. When prices began to soar at the end of the third century Diocletian tried to fix legal maximums. Historians understood that when new silver mines were opened up the price of silver would decrease, and also how changes in rules governing interest rates could provoke a shortage of coin (even if they did not have specialized terms for ‘supply and demand’ or ‘liquidity crisis’). It follows that the devices that the emperors employed to tax this vast economy were pragmatic, if also fundamentally reactive and adaptive. Not much effort was put

into smoothing out differences between provinces taxed in different ways: uniformity and consistency were not sought in themselves, and establishing equity between different groups of taxpayers was never a concern. The emperors harvested the economy opportunistically, aiming to take a share of whatever profit was being made. As a result the early imperial system preserved institutional fossils of every stage of Roman imperialism, and of some earlier ages too.

The political economy of the Roman Republican state before the Punic Wars was almost non-existent. Successful campaigns brought some booty, especially chattel slaves and bullion, most of which was divided between the allies, the citizen soldiers, the general, and the gods. The state had in any case few expenses. Most of the monuments built in this period were temples constructed in fulfilment of battlefield vows and paid for out of the general's share of the booty.²³ The Roman census did allocate tax obligations according to wealth, but we know very little of this direct taxation, except that it was abolished for ever after the defeat of Macedon in 168 BC. Warfare up and down the peninsula extended Roman control over land and manpower. Conquered manpower it exploited through enslavement and those alliances that required subject states to provide troops to support Roman armies. Captured land became *ager publicus* and was used either to found colonies or else rented out to Roman citizens. Those rents (*vectigalia*) became one of the state's first regular and predictable sources of income.²⁴

Overseas wars with Carthage and Macedon brought other sources of income. Indemnities were imposed on defeated Carthage in 241 and 201, in both cases spread into a series of annual payments. Macedon and Syria too had to pay massive indemnities after their respective defeats in 196 and 188 BC. During this period great public building works were initiated in Rome.²⁵ Other public contracts were issued for the provisioning of armies. Only Roman citizens with funds to guarantee them could take public contracts, which were a means of spreading the proceeds of empire among the propertied classes.

The political economy was transformed when Rome began to acquire territory overseas. The first province was Sicily. Carthage had taxed her possessions in the west of the island and perhaps Rome took over their fiscal system after the first Punic war. After the capture of Syracuse in 211 during the second Punic war, Rome adapted the tax system created by King Hiero. What became known as the *Lex Hieronica* in effect imposed a tithe on the agricultural produce of most of the Greek cities of the island. Rome allowed a few cities exemption, and deprived some others of their land. Using taxation to reward allies and punish enemies became a standard Roman technique. Absorbing this small Hellenistic kingdom probably opened the Romans' eyes to

the possibilities of using tax as a means of generating a regular income out of their military supremacy. Certainly when Tiberius Gracchus successfully urged the takeover of the kingdom of Pergamum in 133 the key motive was to provide an income stream for his own project of land distribution. The Roman people received the income from royal taxes and the royal lands. Tax farmers (*publicani*) made a profit from its collection, and this bought Gracchus political support in Rome.

Tax farming of one kind or another remained important long into the empire for the collection of indirect taxes.²⁶ An inscription of Nero's day found recently at Ephesus shows that the various customs duties created by the kings of Pergamum were still being levied in exactly the same way they had done more than two centuries after the Roman takeover.²⁷ Tax farmers remained in charge of collecting internal tariffs long after they had lost the lucrative contracts to collect the land tax in the last years of the Republic. The tariffs levied at the frontiers of the old Pergamene kingdom were probably the model for new internal tariffs, like the 2.5 per cent tax on goods going in and out of the Gallic provinces created in Augustus' reign. To begin with this was levied by publican companies, then by individual contractors (in both cases under the supervision of equestrian procurators, but the latter much easier to control), and finally was handed over to state officials in the late second century.²⁸ That evolution perhaps illustrates a wider trend towards increased central control of taxation, even before economic contraction and the onset of the military crisis in the middle of the third century.



Fig 15. The tax law of Ephesus (now in Ephesus Museum)

Yet local diversity persisted, wherever local systems worked. The tax systems created in Egypt by the Ptolemies were far more complex than those of Sicily, and were administered by a bureaucracy headed by a chief minister in the palace. That system too was simply swallowed up after Actium. The royal *Idioslogos* was now an equestrian official who reported to the prefect of Alexandria and Egypt rather than to the monarch. Other examples abound. Neither Republican generals nor the emperors seemed to feel much need to impose uniform fiscal systems across their domains, so long as the provinces provided what was needed.

Not all parts of the empire had fiscal systems that could so easily be plugged into that of the empire. It is not clear that private property, in the sense that we or Romans would have understood it, even existed in some areas of the north and west before the Roman conquest. Caesar mentioned some customs dues levied by Gallic tribes, but most exchange was not monetized. Here the Romans were forced to develop new mechanisms. A partial exception in the west was the former Carthaginian territory in Spain and North Africa, acquired by Rome after the second and third Punic wars respectively. The silver mines created around Cartagena by Hannibal were confiscated as state property: they were then exploited by hundreds of small-scale contractors using slave labour. Equally the tribute in olive oil paid by

the cities of Tripolitania to Carthage was diverted to Rome. But in many areas Romans had to improvise, usually driven by the need to feed and pay armies that might be in the field for much longer than one campaign and might have lesser expectations of booty. It was during the long campaigns in Spain that the pressure was first felt. Local populations had been required to provide subsistence for the armies since the Punic Wars: irregular levies were also made on allies to pay the troops. At some point during the early second century BC these irregular levies became formalized into regular annual levies of cash and grain.²⁹

The reign of Augustus was a period of fiscal reorganization. Even before the military disasters in Germany towards the end of his reign, it was clear that Rome could not keep expanding forever. And the Augustan solution to civil war was expensive. At the centre a military treasury was created in AD 6, funded by a 1 per cent sales tax and a 5 per cent inheritance tax introduced to provide hypothecated income from which veteran discharge bonuses were to be paid. Eventually around 75 per cent of imperial revenue would be spent on the army.³⁰ So great property assessments were made in many provinces during the 20s BC, renewed in theory at regular intervals thereafter, and permanent tax liabilities were fixed on entire communities. The language used was that of the census, but this was not an exercise in distributing political rights and responsibilities of the kind conducted by Republican censors. Many areas were given a cash assessment, others were instructed to pay taxes in kind. Particularly common were taxes of grain, most likely delivered to nearby military camps. One procurator was based in Trier on the Moselle Valley and coordinated imperial finances across northern France (the province of Belgica) and the Rhineland where around a third of the imperial army was based in the first century AD. It looks very likely he was responsible for local provisioning from the grain lands of the Paris basin. Some tax assessments were more unusual. The Frisians at the Rhine mouth were assessed in cattle hides: this made perfect sense in terms of the dependence of their local economy on stock raising and also in terms of the military need for leather. Other pragmatic idiosyncrasies existed in other parts of the empire.

Vast tracts of new territory were conquered during Augustus' long reign. Much of it was simply subjected to taxation, with new civic territories created in tribal land rather as Pompey had done in Pontus and tribal leaders given the same governmental responsibilities as the civic elites of Asia and North Africa. A certain amount was expropriated to settle troops. Augustus also retained land for himself, especially former royal lands. Increasingly, the same equestrian procurators who supervised provincial taxation oversaw this imperial

property in the provinces. Emperors controlled the greatest quarries, the mines, and much else besides. Some of their vast agricultural holdings had been confiscated from senators, some inherited from their predecessors. At Rome, a scrupulous distinction was maintained between public and imperial finances, but there was no independent oversight of either and the distinction was most useful because it allowed emperors to pose as personal benefactors.

Augustus did not change the taxation of the empire overnight. The terms ‘conquest state’ and ‘tributary empire’ describe ideal types in a sociological sense. From the second century BC, Rome exhibited features of both, but it moved steadily in the direction of a sustainable tributary economy. Booty remained a major objective of campaigning well into Augustus’ reign and occasionally beyond: Trajan’s great building projects in Rome were funded by his wars in Dacia. But the long-term trend was towards the sustainable income that only taxation could provide.

The early imperial Roman tax system strikes us as unnecessarily complex, and yet it did certain jobs well. Being built up of smaller regional tax systems it was able to accommodate the major variations in the economic life of Italy and the provinces, including differences in the level of trade, in the nature of land tenure, and even in farming practices. Uniformity matters most either in terms of distributional justice—not a major concern for the emperors—or if it enables centralized bodies to act more efficiently. But little was centralized. However, there were drawbacks. For a start, there was constant uncertainty over which taxes were current: this is useful for historians who rely largely on monumental epigraphic clarifications to reconstruct the system, but it must have wasted much time. Second, there was a tendency in all systems for the weight of taxation to be pressed on the poorest, since exemptions were commonly given to already privileged groups and individuals. Given the vast inequalities of wealth in the empire, the emperors could only really afford to let the rich off lightly when times were good. Lastly, there was little flexibility. Medieval European monarchs could call a parliament to get new taxes, modern governments adjust rates very regularly, but Roman emperors had no way of doing so; indeed they were vulnerable in tithed areas to poor harvests, and through indirect taxes to decreases in the volume of trade. When times were not good, the fiscal inflexibility of the imperial tax system would catch them out. As the economy went into contraction things got considerably harder.

Further Reading

The Roman economy has attracted some of the most imaginative work

of recent years, and it has also been able to draw on large amounts of new archaeological data of very high quality. The most recent global assessment is contained in the *Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge, 2007). These essays have not superseded the excellent chapters on economic matters and imperial finances in volumes x–xii of the *Cambridge Ancient History*. William Harris has made major contributions to both projects, and the subject more generally: the most important are now collected in his *Rome's Imperial Economy* (Oxford, 2011). The first products of a major new investigation have been published as *Quantifying the Roman Economy* (Oxford, 2009), edited by the project directors, Alan Bowman and Andrew Wilson. Archaeological contributions to the debate are surveyed in Kevin Greene's *Archaeology of the Roman Economy* (London, 1986) and also a collection edited by David Mattingly and John Salmon entitled *Economies beyond Agriculture* (London, 2001). It is probably fair to say the highly original theses about economic life included in Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell's *The Corrupting Sea* (Oxford, 2000) have yet to be fully assimilated into these debates. Christopher Howgego's *Ancient History from Coins* (London, 1995) is not just about Rome or just about the economy, but has fascinating things to say about both, and says them with wonderful clarity.

The study of taxation is based above all on papyrological and epigraphic material. Perhaps for that reason discussion has been mostly technical and mostly published in journals and conference proceedings, although a marvellous recent exception is provided by Michel Cottier's *The Customs Law of Asia* (Oxford, 2008). The best introductions are Peter Brunt's article 'The Revenues of Rome' originally published in the *Journal of Roman Studies* 1981 and reprinted in his *Roman Imperial Themes* (Oxford, 1990) and Dominic Rathbone's chapter on 'The Imperial Finances' in *Cambridge Ancient History* volume x. Probably the most influential contribution to this subject was a paper by Keith Hopkins entitled 'Taxes and Trade in the Roman Empire' published in *Journal of Roman Studies* 1980, arguing that the tax system of the early empire actually stimulated the economy. Hopkins returned to this theme on a number of occasions: his final version is most easily to be found (along with other important essays) in Walter Scheidel and Sitta von Reden's collection *The Ancient Economy* (Edinburgh, 2002).

KEY DATES IN CHAPTER XIII

Main period of Augustan wars of conquest in Europe, ending with the loss of three legions in the Teutoberger Forest
104 AD Conquest of Britain begins under Claudius

Th 66-70 Jewish War

Yr 69 of the Four Emperors. First civil war since Actium

Do 82-83 campaigns on the Rhine

Do 85-91 Domitian's wars against the Dacians

Ar 106 annexed

Tra 114-17 Parthian war. On his death Hadrian withdrew from the new province of Mesopotamia

Ma 166-80 Aurelius' Marcomannic Wars on the Danube frontier

Civ 193-7 leading to establishment of Severan dynasty

Sas 226 Sassanians overthrow the Parthians in Persia

Re 241-72 Shapur I as Emperor of Persia

Re 249-52 Decius

In 253 increasing raids across Rhine by Alamanni and other groups

Ca 260 capture and execution of Valerian by the Persians

Re 260-8 Gallienus. Gallic emperors and rulers of Palmyra allowed to become in effect autonomous. Among other disasters the Franks sack Tarraco (264), the Herculi sack Athens (267), and the Goths sack the sanctuary of Artemis at Ephesus (268)

Ca 268 Aurelian II defeats Goths at Naissos

Re 270-5 Aurelian. Campaigns against Vandals, Alamanni, and Iuthungi, builds a new wall around the centre of Rome, suppresses Palmyrene revolt, defeated Gallic separatist emperor Tetricus and triumphed over both in 274. Organized evacuation of Dacian provinces

Ar 284 accession of Diocletian

XIII WAR

From Caesar Augustus' day to our own time there have been nearly two hundred years. Over that time the Roman people might seem to have grown old and impotent, owing to the laziness of the Caesars, except that under the rule of Trajan it has stirred its limbs and, against everyone's expectation of the old age of empire, it has revived, almost as if it were young once more.

(Florus, *Epitome of Roman History* 1 Preface 8)

The Laziness of the Caesars

The rise of the emperors coincided closely with the effective end of Roman expansion. Contemporaries noticed, and they complained. Tacitus, writing in the early second century, lamented the length of time the conquest of Germany was taking.¹ Florus, writing around the same time, divided Roman history into four ages, each corresponding to one stage of a man's life. Rome's childhood had been under the kings, and its adolescence was the Republican period up until the outbreak of the first Punic war. From then until the reign of Augustus, Rome pacified the entire world. 'This was at once the youth of empire and the robust maturity of Rome.' But in the succeeding period Rome had grown old. The biological analogy no longer seems such a good way to describe imperial history, but the reign of Augustus still seems to mark a rupture.

That break is naturally a simplification. The emperors continued to celebrate their foreign victories on an unparalleled scale. They continued to fight wars after the death of Augustus, and even conquered a little more territory. But—leaving to one side a general trend to extend the system of provinces over regions previously governed by allied kings—there were only a few areas of genuine expansion. Britain was invaded in Claudius' reign and conquered (very slowly, and cautiously) over the rest of the first century AD. In south-west Germany, the frontier was advanced under Domitian from the Rhine across the Black Forest to the Neckar Valley. Trajan conquered part of what is now Romania in the early second century. He also invaded Mesopotamia, modern-day Syria, and Iraq. But the scale of

these expansions seems feeble compared with the audacious conquests of the 60s and 50s BC or even to those of the heyday of Augustan expansion between 15 BC and AD 9 when his sons fought their great wars across Europe. Besides, all the new territories except Britain were rapidly lost again. Mesopotamia was handed back to the Parthians by Trajan's successor Hadrian. The conquests of Domitian and Trajan in Europe were lost in the military crisis of the third century AD. Future emperors campaigned beyond the Danube and the Euphrates, now and again, but the imperial frontiers hardly moved.



Fig 16. A detail of Trajan's Column showing triumph of the emperor after the first campaign against the Dacians

Many of the core institutions of the Augustan empire built on the experiments of Caesar, Pompey, and even earlier generations. Alongside developments in taxation we can set the practice of extending the citizenship; a growing dependence on local elites to run their own communities; and the practice of using city-states as a basis for government, even in areas where they had never existed before. One way to describe the transformation of the empire at the turn of the millennium is to say that over a long period the Roman state experienced a tension between two divergent tendencies. The first we could label the pursuit for glory, the second the desire for security. A move in one direction made other moves that cohered with it more feasible, and so more likely. The disasters of the middle second and early first century BC—the Cimbric invasion, the Social and Mithridatic Wars, and the rise of the *populares*—had pushed the state a long way

in the direction of security. Hegemony had been converted to empire, and new institutions developed to rule it. By contrast the accelerating competition between leaders from Sulla to Augustus pushed the empire towards the more risky pursuit of glory. After Actium security always trumped glory.

Perhaps this choice was never made consciously. Roman ideology certainly did not always reflect the new logic of empire. The idea that world conquest was a realistic and laudable aim was repeatedly restated, most influentially in the classroom, where it was encoded in the classics of Latin literature as defined in the last century BC. Imperial monuments and imperial ceremonial also reproduced the incidental music of a conquest state, long after it no longer suited the plot of Roman history.² But detailed investigation of the military system of the empire—investigations made possible by a wealth of epigraphic data—reveals a set of mutually supporting institutions that were well geared to preserving peace, and that consequently made further conquests difficult and costly. It has even been argued that the emperors made so much noise about conquest to compensate for their reduced willingness to attempt it.³ Trajan was in some senses a throwback, a proof that an individual emperor need not be trapped by the role. Yet his reign, with its futile and short-lived conquests, is also a demonstration that expansion no longer suited the Roman Empire very well.

Augustus had offered an earlier object lesson when he decided on the conquest of Europe. Some historians have tried to excuse this on the grounds of geographical ignorance: maybe he did think the world was smaller than it was, or had no decent maps? None of this is believable. The diameter of the globe had been estimated two centuries earlier. Geographical works of the day included descriptions of India and mentioned the distant silk people, the Chinese. Africa had been circumnavigated half a millennium before Augustus. Much more likely, Augustus' European front was a tactical error driven by short-term political difficulties. A number of Augustus' challengers in the 20s BC had been commanders of major provinces. Did he dare let someone else achieve victories in the Balkans or south Egypt? Besides, it was still unclear what Augustus' own role in the state would be once he had restored civil peace. Triumphs for his heirs might help their succession plans too. External warfare was evidently still popular in Rome, although it is noticeable that from this point on fewer and fewer Italians fought in the legions. So Augustus fell back on the pursuit of glory when the logic of his situation demanded more efforts to create security. The poetry written in his court advertised future campaigns, promising conquests in Britain and Parthia, India and Scythia, while monumental art offered images of a world already

conquered.⁴

But where to start? Persia was a dangerous enemy which had defeated Crassus and humiliated Antony, and did not seem to want further conflict. The tribes of northern Europe must have seemed an easy option: Caesar had conquered all Gaul in only eight years with as many legions. Could Britain and Germany offer anything other than easy victories? At first the victories did seem easy, and the armies of Drusus and Tiberius rolled around the Alps, campaigned up to the Danube, and across the Rhine as far as the Elbe. But rapid progress was deceptive. Conquered Pannonia rebelled in AD 6, and it took three years to restore order.

Almost immediately a Roman army of three legions was massacred in Germany in AD 9. The Varian disaster—named after the general made to carry the can—was a trauma that echoed through the history and literature of the last years of Augustus' reign. The astrologer Manilius used it as an example of the terrible catastrophes foretold by comets. The actual defeat was a running battle lasting several days: the site was recently located at Kalkriese near Osnabrück and has been painstakingly reconstructed. It cost the Roman army nearly 10 per cent of its manpower. All territory east of the Rhine was abandoned. A half-built Roman city has recently been found at Waldgirmes, offering eerie witness to the sudden change of direction. A great new province had been planned, and construction had begun on a network of civil communities just like that created in Gaul after Caesar's conquest and in Pontus by Pompey. Roman accounts, reflecting the official line, blame Varus for behaving as if he was in a conquered province, spending his time giving justice, imposing taxation, and dispersing his troops among native communities. But he was certainly following orders from the emperor. After disaster struck Rome pulled back to the Rhine, Waldgirmes was abandoned, and with it all the territory up to the Elbe. Conquest was never formally renounced, but it was not resumed in Augustus' reign. Another imperial prince, Germanicus, visited the site of the disaster during the next reign but his campaigns were also—if less dramatically—unsuccessful. The north began to be quietly written off as ungovernable, poor, undesirable. Strabo, writing under the Emperor Tiberius, reported that Britain too would not pay the cost of its occupation.⁵ Appian, a second-century historian, went so far as to claim alien nations had begged to be admitted to the empire, but the emperors had turned them down.⁶ These were all lies.

For the emperors had much to gain from security, and there were easier routes to glory. Did Augustus ever realize that the real motor for the wars of Pompey and Caesar had been competition? And now there were no rivals. Emperors did not plan for peace, but they learned from their mistakes. The risks of failure never made up for the

potential rewards offered by military expeditions. Much more could be achieved by diplomacy. And emperors soon found out how to massage the news from the frontier, playing up minor successes, suppressing news of reverses, claiming any victories for themselves, and blaming generals on the ground like Varus when things went badly wrong. The laziness of the Caesars was a very pragmatic response to the absence of rivals.

A World without History?

The choice of security over glory makes for unexciting history. Or so the senators of the imperial age affected to think. Court intrigues and imperial assassinations actually make for rather good drama. The histories written by the senators Tacitus and Dio, and the scandalous biographies of the courtier Suetonius and his late imperial successors, have inspired their share of racy novels and movies. But it is true that it is difficult to find a clear narrative in the political history of the first two centuries AD. Institutionally, culturally, and economically, there were slow changes.⁷ The citizen body expanded and with it Roman law stretched over more and more of the empire's subjects: that process of assimilation continued long after the Edict of Caracalla.⁸ The greatest cities grew and acquired their complements of monuments. The rich grew richer, building great rural residences and endowing festivals, temples, theatres, and bathhouses in their native cities.⁹ Trade flourished across the urban network, and between the great ecological divides into which the empire was divided. All these changes were real, but few were visible to contemporaries, and they were not the subject of history as the ancients understood it.

There were gradual changes in the style of imperial rule too. The monarchical nature of the emperors' rule became more overt. As the emperors ruled from their itinerant courts they seem to have gradually developed a preference for direct over indirect control, and a greater reliance on state officials rather than aristocratic former magistrates. Augustus had travelled widely, but few of his first-century AD successors spent long away from Rome. The expeditions of Trajan and the restless travels of Hadrian were in some senses optional, and Antoninus Pius who reigned from 138 to 161 spent most of his time in Rome. The situation began to change with Marcus Aurelius, who succeeded him until his death in 180. Marcus and his co-emperor Lucius Verus (161–9), and then his son and successor Commodus, who ruled until his assassination in 192, were all compelled to spend long periods of their reigns on the frontiers. So did all the Severan emperors who ruled Rome between AD 193 and 235. These necessary displacements were accompanied by the emergence of a new and

more openly monarchical style. Away from senatorial sensibilities emperors could rule like the kings they had always been.

By the early fourth century there were up to four different courts at any one time, strung out along the northern and eastern frontiers of the empire. Wherever the courts rested for a few years—Trier or Antioch, Sirmium or Ravenna—magnificent palaces were created with great bathhouses, hippodromes, and reception areas. The empire came to be divided into four great prefectures, each headed by a praetorian prefect whose administration extended down into a growing number of provinces. Senators no longer played much part in the administration of the empire, and the Senate itself (or senates after Constantine created a second one in his new capital on the Bosphorus) became peripheral to the political system. Ambassadors sought out emperors in the camps; law making had to be by edict rather than senatorial decree; consultation—even for form's sake—was no longer practical. Emperors were away from Rome for years, and then decades. Constantius II, who with his brothers succeeded Constantine in 337, did not visit Rome until AD 357. Before that new order came about, however, the empire had to face a much more serious military emergency, one that in some senses lasted for two entire generations.

The Early Imperial Security System

Historians sometimes write of Rome as having a Grand Strategy,¹⁰ but there is no real sign that any such thing was ever planned or implemented. The deployment of the legions was accidental, the evolving product of incremental changes made in response to immediate needs. When expansion ended, Augustus' campaigning armies had stopped in their tracks. Troops would be moved for imperial expeditions like Claudius' invasion of Britain, or if they were needed to crush a rebellion or participate in a civil war. Over time the legions gravitated to the points of stress. Spain was far from the frontiers and relatively peaceful, and as a result the size of its garrison was progressively reduced. On the Danube and in the east troop numbers increased slightly, but always limited by the salary bill. The emperors knew where the troops were, how many they were, and what they were owed. But there is no sign they made use of this information to plan for anything but the short term.¹¹

It is not always clear exactly where the armies were deployed in the early years of Augustus' reign, except that they were kept out of Italy, where only the Praetorian Guard—made loyal through extra pay—were allowed in the capital. But a decade into Tiberius' reign we happen to have a snapshot, from a passage in Tacitus' *Annales*, of the

locations of what were now twenty-five legions.¹² They were concentrated overwhelmingly on the northern and eastern frontiers: facing across the Rhine and Danube, that is, and stationed along the long frontier with Parthia and its vassals. Only token forces remained in Spain, Africa, and Egypt. Many other provinces were effectively unarmed. Legions of heavy armed infantry formed the core of the early imperial army. They resembled the Republican armies in terms of their equipment and battlefield tactics. Auxiliary units of cavalry, light infantry, missile troops supported them, alongside teams of engineers and other specialists. There were naval bases in the Mediterranean, and in time fleets were established on the major rivers. That pattern stayed more or less unchanged until the middle of the third century, although the number of legions increased to thirty-three and some were moved to newly conquered regions like southern Britain and Dacia. The total strength was always very small. At its height the early imperial army numbered less than 200,000 legionaries and perhaps as many support troops, to protect and control an empire of between 50 and 100 million inhabitants.

Keeping the army small was a financial necessity given the huge share of the imperial budget it consumed. This meant it had to be highly efficient. The campaigning armies of the late Republic and the reign of Augustus had marched and camped in strength, but a different disposition was needed for their new roles. The logic of the imperial frontiers was all based on establishing a communications advantage over its opponents. Little by little the frontiers became a dense network of bases—some very small—signal stations, barriers, control points, and, most important of all, roads. Hadrian's Wall provides an excellent example of the kind of system that developed in the second century, but the ditches and ramparts that so impress us today were among the latest and least vital components of a frontier system. A precious collection of letters from Vindolanda reveals the collection and processing of information on what was happening beyond the frontier; the management of provisioning; the constant redeployments of soldiers along the frontier; and communications back into the province.¹³ Signal stations ran down the coasts watching for raids by sea. Groups of scouts operated far north of the wall, and local leaders were cultivated with gifts that Romans called subsidies. A slightly different system of signal stations and forts passed news on barbarian movements up and down the upper German *Limes*, and in the pre-desert of North Africa military installations were different again. Physically the frontiers developed in a piecemeal way, adapting to local circumstances not a central model, but the guiding logic was the same.

The vast majority of military units were based on the frontiers. Yet

soldiers were ubiquitous in the empire. Detachments provided protection for provincial governors and procurators, for messengers and tax collectors, for movements of grain and cash, for the managers of imperial mines and quarries with their workforces of slaves and criminals, and for the authorities of the larger, more unsettled cities. Centurions in particular acquired a whole range of functions we do not normally associate with the military. They acted as district officers in the northern provinces, can be found on detachment organizing provisioning and as the most recognizable representatives of Roman government depicted in the New Testament. Particularly trusted soldiers served as *beneficarii consulares*, effectively *aides de camp* to governors. The early empire had no civil service, and there were some jobs that it was impolitic to entrust to imperial slaves and freedmen.



Fig 17. Hadrian's Wall

Imperial propaganda proclaimed that the soldiers protected the provinces. That picture is only half true. The legions were also the emperors' ultimate weapon against both provincial rebellions and

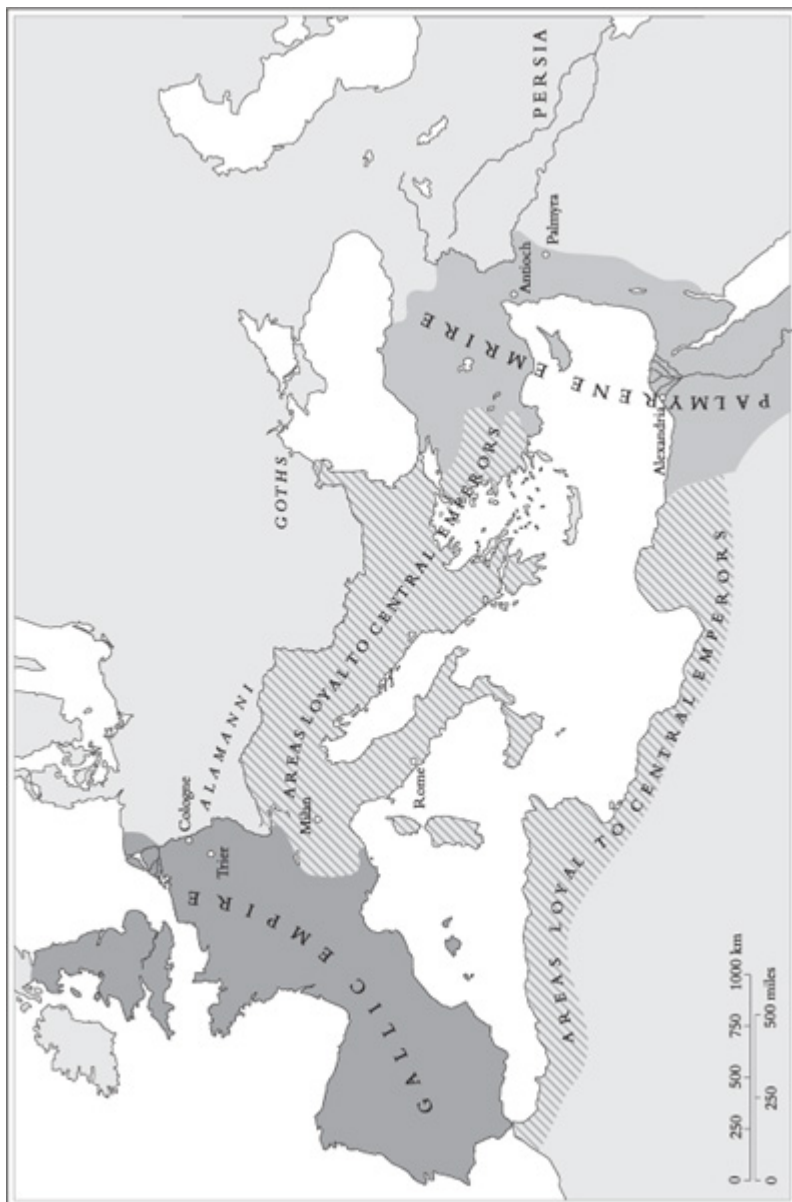
aristocratic usurpers.¹⁴ The mass demobilization of Roman soldiers at the end of the Triumviral period had been driven by financial and political priorities. Armies were dangerous, unpaid ones doubly so. Now they would be composed of career soldiers who served for twenty or more years, loyal to the emperors, not their commanders.¹⁵ On retirement the emperors provided each man with a substantial bonus, so long as he had proved himself loyal. Commanders, drawn from the senatorial and equestrian orders, came and went. It was the centurions, risen from the ranks, who provided continuity of command and military expertise. Ceremonial was deployed to bind the soldiers to the imperial family. Army units celebrated imperial birthdays, and worshipped the emperors along with the *signa*, their standards. A third-century calendar from the eastern frontier post of Dura lists endless holidays marking the anniversaries of imperial family members, some long dead. Emperors and their sons took care to visit the legions, and even commanded them when it was safe to do so.

Mostly the system worked. Civil wars only broke out in 68 and 196 when entire dynasties had been extinguished. A few rebellious generals discovered to their cost the depth of loyalty the legions felt to the imperial family of the day.¹⁶ That loyalty meant that the legions could also be deployed against provincial rebels. During AD 69 the legions of the Rhineland were deployed first against Vindex, a senator from southern Gaul who had rebelled against Nero, and then against the Batavians of the lower Rhine who had tried to use the Roman civil war that followed his death as an opportunity to secede. The legions were in principle recruited from Roman citizens, but Italians rarely joined up after Augustus' reign. The main sources of recruits were first the Roman cities of the inner provinces and later the camps themselves. One sign of the success of the emperors' investment in maintaining the loyalty of the troops (and perhaps too of the socialization effects of long service) is that legions almost never made common cause with neighbouring provincial populations. Troops recruited in Gaul and Germany were content to be deployed against British, Gallic, and German rebels, and the army of Numidia to march against African usurpers.¹⁷

Mostly, however, the soldiers inhabited a world of their own. The larger camps of northern Britain, the Rhineland, the Danube provinces, and Africa eventually came to resemble cities, equipped with monumental walls and gates, stone-built amphitheatres, bathhouses, and shrines. Formally soldiers could not marry and camps were organized in barrack blocks arranged in precise parallel lines, but the artefacts and clothes found in them shows there were women and children in these communities too, as well as in the informal

villages called *canabae* that grew up alongside them. In Syria and Egypt soldiers mostly lived in cities in any case. Documents from Dura show them marrying and buying land and in general assuming the sort of roles in local communities that their relatively good pay and excellent connections could secure them.¹⁸

The Roman Empire had no Grand Strategy, but it nevertheless developed a frontier system quite like those of many other tributary empires. The most common point of comparison is China's Inner Asian Frontier, the limit between the areas controlled directly by Chinese officials and a great periphery within which subject nations shaded out into barbarian allies and enemies.¹⁹ China, like Rome, enjoyed some technological advantages over its neighbours, although in some periods there was something of an arms race as China sought to prevent technology transfers to the barbarians. China, like Rome, was able to provision and supply its troops from an intensely farmed and taxed hinterland. The Chinese too deployed a mixture of linear barriers and garrisons of regular soldiers with irregular allies, and they too sought an information advantage over their opponents. The information system extended deep into the provinces, to the imperial court or courts. It was not Grand Strategy that preserved either empire, but the tactical advantages given by information superiority.



Map 5. The third-century crisis

Crisis on the Frontiers

The Roman system had, naturally, its weaknesses too. One consequence of depending on an infantry army based at the edge of empire was that it was slow to respond to disasters in the interior. Roman troops were generally successful against provincial rebellions during the first two centuries AD because most rebellions occurred

relatively near the frontiers, and the rebels were usually stationary and had no fortifications. Order was generally restored within months. The Jewish war lasted as long as it did because the Jews possessed fortresses. Another problem was that more mobile enemies, once they broke through the frontier, could outrun Roman armies. When the frontiers did collapse, as they did in the third century, and raiding parties penetrated as far as Athens and Ephesus and Tarragona, they found rich cities with no defenders and often no functioning defensive walls. Civic populations learned the lesson. During the late third and fourth centuries, city after city built defensive circuits, sometimes dismantling earlier monuments to create safe zones in the middle of once extensive cities. One third-century emperor, Aurelian, actually built walls around the centre of the city of Rome. One of his predecessors, Gallienus, had also begun developing a more mobile army, one based on cavalry, which could act as a rapid response force. The use of troops of this kind, alongside the legions, became more and more evident in the changed conditions of war on the northern frontier. Constantine too was credited with an enlargement of their role. Meanwhile, at the eastern end of empire Romans and Persians were both developing armies based on heavy cavalry. Where urban fortifications were also improving as fast as techniques of siege warfare, the military landscape came to look more and more medieval, a world of knights and castles amidst a landscape of peasant villagers.

The gradual social and economic transformations of the first three centuries AD were not confined within the political limits of the empire. The political economy of the empire may be thought of as a vast redistributive system that drew resources from all over the interior and spent them at the frontiers, mostly as army pay. The court was the other main recipient and this too was increasingly located at the edge rather than the geographical centre of the empire. Perhaps no provincial societies were transformed as utterly as those on the frontiers. The effects can be traced in the spread of new cults, of epigraphy and technology, and in the apparent prosperity of areas that had once been marginal. Nor were these effects confined to Roman subjects. The eastern frontier bisected a chain of caravan cities with ancient shared traditions of language, cult, and commerce. Greek, Aramaic, and its sister languages were spoken in a great arch that stretched from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. By the late third century there were populations of Jews, Christians, and Manichaeans on both sides of the Romano-Persian frontier.

Rome's northern frontier had bisected other peoples with shared prehistoric cultures. The existence of a frontier zone promoted connections. Population densities were low in this region, relative to

the Mediterranean world, and there were no cities beyond the Roman provinces. But the agricultural potential was high. Commerce, including slaving, crossed the frontier, and there is archaeological evidence for Roman manufactures in a broad band 50–100 kilometres (around 30–60 miles) wide stretching back from the frontier.²⁰ There were technology transfers too. The political units and ethnic groups of this zone seem to have been quite unstable. Roman writers sometimes blamed this on differences of temperament and characterized barbarism as a deficiency in the stability of settled, urban societies. Perhaps the larger hegemonies were intrinsically temporary. Yet these populations were not nomadic, and it is possible their political fragmentation was actively managed by Rome, which (like China) gave subsidies to their friends, took hostages, sheltered exiled princes, and generally tried to extend their control well beyond the limit of the provinces. Periodic raids and expeditions by both sides were simply one part of a complex relationship. From early in the first century AD there is also evidence for the recruitment of ‘barbarians’ to serve in the Roman army, and some rose to high ranks. Romans often found themselves facing enemy armies commanded by former Roman soldiers, like Arminius who had led the massacre of Varus’ legions in AD 9, in fact, and many spoke Latin. By the second century, many societies bordering the Roman frontier were locked into a series of interdependent relationships with Roman power. Certainly the leaders of the groups we hear of in the third century, such as the Alamanni on the upper Rhine, and the Goths on the lower Danube, knew the Roman Empire well.²¹

That world began to change in the late second century AD for reasons that are fiercely disputed. One school of thought sees the transformation of barbarian societies as the main cause of the collapse of the frontiers. The long relationship with Rome created better organized and equipped enemies who knew very well the riches the empire had to offer. Eventually Rome lost the arms race and the frontiers folded. Others see the change originating in Rome’s increasing military commitment on the eastern front. As troops were withdrawn from the west to serve first against Persia, and then in successive civil wars, the delicate balance on the western frontiers collapsed: Alamanni, Franks, and others walked into provinces that were effectively undefended. Yet others see the origin of the crisis in obscure movements on the distant Steppe, where truly nomadic peoples, especially those that Romans later came to know as the Huns, pressed hard on the settled barbarians of temperate Europe pushing some populations, like the Goths, south and west onto the Roman frontiers. Large population movements certainly occurred within Europe in some periods, and had intruded into Mediterranean world

on several occasions, including the Gallic sacks of Rome and Delphi in the fourth and third centuries BC and the Cimbric wars and the Helvetian migration at the end of the Republic. Various combinations of all these factors might, naturally, be imagined. The problem is simply that we know very little of movements so far beyond the Roman frontier.

One traditional narrative of the crisis begins in the late second century AD with Marcus Aurelius' wars against the Marcomanni and Sarmatians, wars that kept him occupied for years on the northern frontier. The new provinces he allegedly contemplated creating would have been to the west of the three Dacian provinces founded by Trajan earlier in the century. But unlike Trajan's wars, these did not result from an imperial initiative. The Marcomannic Wars began with a German invasion of Italy in 166 and continued, with only short periods of remission, until 175. A new war drew Marcus back in 177 and he was still campaigning on his death in 180. Commodus abandoned the war rather than finishing it. The frontier evidently held, even while Roman armies were distracted by civil wars in the 190s. Renewed activity on the northern frontier began on the Danube in the 230s with raids on Black Sea vassals of Rome and then on the Roman province of Moesia. Gothic warbands raided Dacia and the Danube provinces in the 240s. Decius, who ruled between 249 and 252, briefly repelled them, but was killed in a counterattack. Goths continued to raid through the 250s. Who were these groups, not yet united into a single force or nation? One possibility is that the Goths originated among populations who had lived on the borders of Trajan's new Dacian provinces, peoples who had recently undergone processes of social transformation of the kind experienced by other German-speaking groups on the Rhine much earlier.²² Whether wars on the lower Danube led to Roman neglect of points further west, or whether now-invisible pressures moved east to west over the century, the security crisis spread. On the middle Danube, the Sarmatians raided Noricum, Rhaetia, and Pannonia in the later 250s. At the same time there were raids by the Alamanni across the Rhine into Gaul and down into Spain. During the 260s Tarraco was sacked by the Franks, Athens by the Heruli, and Ephesus by the Goths. The Roman recovery began finally in 268 when Claudius II defeated the Goths at Naissos: thereafter it was surprisingly fast. Aurelian expelled the Iuthungi from Italy in the early 270s and Probus repelled the last major invasion of Gaul across the Rhine in 276.

War on Two Fronts

The task of restoring normal relations with the northern peoples was

conducted in deadly counterpart with a deterioration of relations on the eastern front. It is common to blame this on the appearance of a new Persian dynasty, the Sassanians, in 226 AD and the aggression of the Emperor Shapur (241–72), who fought several wars against Rome, defeated the Emperor Philip in 240, seized the city of Antioch in 256, and captured and executed the Emperor Valerian in 260. But the Romans bore some responsibility for all this. Again the story can be traced back to the 160s. After Trajan's conquest and Hadrian's withdrawal from his new province of Mesopotamia there had been peace with the Parthians until the joint reign of Marcus and Lucius, when Roman armies once again invaded Persia, without much provocation.²³ Severus did the same a couple of decades later. Roman aggression did a good deal to destabilize the Parthian dynasty, creating an opportunity for the Sassanian takeover. It is difficult to tell now whether Persia exploited Rome's difficulties in the north or vice versa or whether the security system of the early Roman Empire was simply incapable of dealing with threats on so many fronts.

What is clear is that the inability of the emperors to defend the great cities and unarmed provinces of the interior of the empire led to a crisis in their legitimacy. One index of failure was that in the period 235–84 more than twenty emperors reigned. The exact number depends on how many rebels are considered as short-lived rulers. A second index of failure was geographical fragmentation. Local rulers, client kings, and army commanders took over responsibility for protecting their immediate localities. When Aurelian came to power in 270, most of Gaul, Spain, and Germany had been ruled from the Rhineland for over a decade, and the monarchs of the caravan city of Palmyra in Syria controlled much of the Near East, even including Alexandria. Usurpations had been attempted in Africa, on the Danube, in Egypt, and in Asia Minor. Successful and unsuccessful usurpers alike were drawn from the military classes, their links to their armies personal and contingent on their continued success. Civil war and failure at the frontiers fed off each other. Only military success could restore legitimacy and reverse the fragmentation of authority. Valerian's son Gallienus (253–68) achieved some external successes. Aurelian (270–5), who had expelled the Iuthungi from Italy, went on to regain control of Egypt (272), to suppress the secessions led by Palmyra (273) and the emperors of Trier (274). His successors inflicted more defeats on the Germans. Carus finally carried the Persian war into Mesopotamia and captured the Persian capital Ctesiphon. He died on campaign in 283 and his successor Numerian withdrew, but within a year he had been replaced by Diocletian, who ruled until his abdication in 305. During his long reign he too fought on the Danube and against Persia, and had to assert his power in

Egypt and against rebels in the west. He left behind a completely reorganized Roman Empire. The period from the end of the Severan dynasty in 235 to the accession of Diocletian in 284 is sometimes known as the Anarchy. Any 'crisis' that lasts for half a century would inflict a huge cost on institutions. Diocletian's empire did indeed need a new coinage, a new taxation system, and a new administration as well as a new military system. Under Constantine it acquired a new capital and a new religion too. But the late Roman Empire was not created in a revolution. Well before Diocletian's reign a new ideal of the emperor had emerged, crowding out the productions of senatorial historians and Greek panegyrists. This emperor was a soldier rather than a fellow citizen, and he was surrounded by spectacular ceremonial and ferocious justice.

For us, looking back with hindsight, the most amazing aspect of this story is not that the crisis occurred, but that the empire survived it at all. The energy of the soldier emperors was clearly one factor, but there were other sources of strength not appreciated at the time. Consider, for example, the commitment of the empire's elite to its continued existence. The 'Gallic emperors' who controlled Gaul, and at times the Spanish and British provinces, between 260 and 274 are a case in point. The main figures, Postumus, Victorinus, and Tetricus I, were all soldiers and all apparently descended from rich local families. Their support was drawn from both local nobles and the army of the Rhine. Their 'empire' originated in a revolt against Gallienus, but its main efforts were directed at survival and the preservation of vested interests. Following the successes of first Claudius II and then Aurelian, provinces, cities, and then even the last of the emperors rejoined the central empire. Throughout the secession the political propaganda, known mainly through coinages, was utterly Roman. At the other end of the empire the fierce resistance put up by Greek cities drew on even older allegiances. Publius Herennius Dexippus, a historian who organized resistance at Athens, presented his efforts as just the latest episode in a long history of Athenian resistance to the barbarian. The survival of these allegiances is impressive testimony to the durability of the identities created in the early empire. The empire survived because, when it seemed about to come apart, the ruling classes and many of its subjects *chose* to participate in its rescue.

Further Reading

The evolution of the Roman military machine is surveyed in a number of essays in the second volume of the *Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare* (Cambridge, 2007) edited by Philip Sabin, Hans van Wees, and Michael Whitby. Adrian Goldsworthy's *Roman Army at War*

(Oxford, 1996) is a lively account of how it worked in practice. The evolution of a stable frontier, and its social and economic consequences, is the subject of C. R. Whittaker's *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore, 1994). Debate still largely responds to Edward Luttwak's controversial but stimulating *Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore, 1976). A good selection of these responses is included in John Rich and Graham Shipley's collection *War and Society in the Roman World* (London, 1993). Benjamin Isaac's *Limits of Empire* (Oxford, 1990) discusses the role of Roman armies in controlling the provincial populations they claimed to protect.

The complex history of the third-century crisis is covered in the usual reference works, but there is a particular good account in David Potter's *The Roman Empire at Bay* (London, 2004). A good sense of what historians are arguing about at the moment is given by the collection *Crises and the Roman Empire* (Leiden, 2007) edited by Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn, and Danielle Slootjes.

XIV

IMPERIAL IDENTITIES

Once upon a time Kings ruled this City, but they were not fated to have home-grown successors. Outsiders took over their rule, foreigners in fact, for when Numa succeeded Romulus he came from the Sabine lands—not far away to be sure, but it made him a foreigner in those days. When Tarquin the Elder succeeded Ancus Marcius, well he was of mixed race, for his father was Demaratus the Corinthian, while his mother was born in Etruscan Tarquinii. She was not a wealthy women, as you might imagine given she had agreed to such an inferior marriage, and for that reason he was unable to hold office at home. But he migrated to Rome, and here was made king.

(From a speech of Claudius inscribed on bronze, *ILS* 212)

Desperately Seeking the Romans

The Emperor Claudius' speech to the Senate in AD 48 proposed opening up membership of the Senate to the wealthiest and most noble citizens of the provinces of Gaul. Part of his words are preserved on a bronze tablet at Lyon, and Tacitus records the resentment the proposal aroused among senators.¹ Fear that admitting new blood might dilute national identity is all too familiar today. Claudius' appeal to an ancient tradition of inclusiveness maybe did not convince, but then he was an emperor and did not need to. But he was correct that Roman identity was in flux right from the very beginning.

It is impossible to write an account of the Roman Empire without lapsing into writing about the 'Romans', as if it is obvious who should be included in that term. But it is surprisingly difficult to answer the simple question 'Who were the Romans?'

Formal answers exist, of course. If we were to apply strict legal criteria we would have to focus on Roman citizens.² But the nature and composition of that group was repeatedly transformed, as Rome grew from a conventional city-state, with its assemblies, taxation, and armies all based on citizenship, into a Mediterranean power composed of different kinds of imperial subjects. En route we would need to consider the citizens of the middle Republic, concentrated in Rome,

but with a penumbra of citizen colonies up and down the peninsula; then Italy after the Social War in which almost all free people were citizens; then the situation in the early empire when citizenship was acquired by various privileged groups, including provincial aristocrats and auxiliary veterans; and finally the Roman world after Caracalla's Edict by which citizenship was generalized, a world in which most people were citizens and yet the status was strangely still valued.³

It would also be necessary to factor in peculiarities such as the Roman habit of extending citizenship to many former slaves, and also a range of 'half citizens', most of them termed 'Latins' of one kind or another. That title was extended from its original sense of citizens of other Latin states, first to members of the Latin colonies, founded by Rome in Italy in the middle Republican period, and filled with a mixture of settlers drawn from Romans and allies; then to citizens of certain provincial communities granted the Latin right in a series of regional grants beginning in Caesar's day; and also to a different category of freedmen who were not fully citizens and were known as Junian Latins (after the *Lex Iunia* which created the status). Other Mediterranean citizenships were drawn into the system: within the astonishingly complex society of Roman Egypt, Alexandrine citizens meant not just citizens of the provincial capital but also a status group treated as halfway between other Egyptians and Romans. Multiple citizenships were absolutely normal too, not just in Cicero's sense that he had two homelands—Arpinum and Rome—but also in the sense that many provincial communities had come to allow dual citizenship, and had also created half-citizenships of their own, giving resident aliens a range of rights and obligations. Some of these grants were privileges, others devices designed to make sure the ever more mobile propertied classes did not evade local obligations either where they lived or where they were born.⁴

Nor were all citizens equal. There were experiments in the Republican period with creating citizens without the vote. The traditional assemblies were in any case organized in complex ways that gave more weight to the votes of those in higher census categories than to others. Freedmen could vote, but in many cities were not allowed to hold office or become members of the most senior councils. Women of all social statuses faced strict limits on how far they could exercise citizen rights. The wives and daughters of Roman citizens could confer citizenship on their male children, but their political participation was effectively zero, very few had financial autonomy or could make independent use of the law, and their roles in ritual—if often prominent—were always subordinated to the authority of male priests. Many of the things that defined the role of citizen in Republican Rome—including voting, fighting, sacrificing,

being taxed, taking public contracts, and being counted in the census—never applied to women. The crucial point is that Romans did not use citizenship as a way of creating a hard boundary between themselves and aliens. Instead they used the language of citizenship to express a set of statuses and relationships through which individuals might be involved in the community in different ways, and also to various degrees.

Other ways existed to mark the boundaries. Romans were often contrasted to barbarians, especially in imperial propaganda. A common coin type of the second century depicted a mounted emperor trampling down a cowering barbarian. More elaborate developments of these motifs appear on monuments such as Trajan's Column. Roman literature also displays a rich harvest of xenophobic and racist stereotyping, a legacy presumably of traditions of invective that were so central to Roman oratory.⁵ Then again, scholars writing in Latin since Cicero's day differentiated between the writings of the Greeks and those of *nostri*, which literally means 'our people'. Tacitus does this describing writers who had dealt with Britain before he did, and Pliny the Elder added a list of sources for each book of his *Natural History* divided into Roman and foreign authorities. The arrangement was replicated in Roman libraries where Greek and Latin books seem, in theory at least, to have been shelved separately. Roman priests also traditionally distinguished a bundle of cults considered of alien origin as needing to be celebrated 'with Greek rituals': in fact, the rituals were nothing of the kind, but the idea of a difference evidently mattered.⁶

The distinctions between Romans and others probably mattered most *inside* provincial societies. Metal detector users in southern Spain have found a number of fragments of bronze tablets that record constitutions granted local communities by the emperors in the late first century AD.⁷ These Latin *municipia* must have been strange worlds, in some ways miniatures of Rome with councils, collegiate magistracies, priesthoods, gladiatorial *munera*, courts, and so on. One clause of this basic law stipulates that any gaps in its coverage should be dealt with as if the parties were Roman citizens. In fact, almost the only true Roman citizens were the magistrates, those who had been magistrates, and the descendants of those who had been magistrates: plus their ex-slaves of course!

Citizens were generally the most privileged members of the societies in which they lived. A dramatic scene in the Acts of the Apostles describes how Paul, returning to Jerusalem from his mission in Asia, is caught up by an angry mob, attracting the attention of the Roman soldiers. Addressing them in Greek he asks permission to defend himself to his fellow Jews, which he does in the vernacular

explaining he is a Jew of Tarsus, educated and raised in Jerusalem, and then describes his conversion. His speech rouses the mob to a frenzy, and he is arrested and dragged off by the soldiers to be flogged. At this point (and only then) he reveals to the centurion that he has in fact Roman citizenship. The centurion is appalled that he had ordered him to be flogged. There is a nice exchange between the centurion, bitter at having paid for his citizenship, and Paul who declares he is a citizen by birth. Was this yet another distinction that mattered? The centurion has Paul released at once, and handed over to the priestly council of the Sanhedrin where Paul deftly stirs up a squabble between two priestly factions, the Sadducees and the Pharisees.⁸ It does not matter very much how historical these incidents are because even if fictionalized the anecdote reveals interesting assumptions about how identity politics worked in the Roman provinces. Paul is presented as cleverly exploiting his multiple identities; as a Jew, as a Roman citizen, as a citizen of Tarsus, as a Pharisee, and as a resident alien within Jerusalem. His ability to speak more than one language clearly helped too.

It is easy to identify other locations in the empire where these fine distinctions mattered. Frontier societies had their own gradations of status.⁹ Legionaries were recruited from citizens but auxiliaries from other subject populations, those whom Romans termed *peregrini*, a word that simply meant foreigners. The populations they served among were mostly *peregrini* too, but unlike them the auxiliaries could look forward to citizenship when they were discharged. Hundreds of bronze certificates of these grants to auxiliary veterans have been recovered by archaeologists: they were obviously displayed rather proudly in the homes of former soldiers. During their twenty to twenty-five years of service, soldiers of all kinds naturally formed relationships with local women: but these were not formally marriages and children born to them would not be citizens. Special dispensations allowed soldiers to make wills, but their wives and children had no automatic rights in respect of them. An auxiliary veteran could make his slave a citizen by freeing him, but any children he had fathered before he was discharged would have to join up themselves if they wanted the same status. Considerations like these mean we can never study 'Roman societies' without including many who were not Romans. Yet if we treat all provincials as 'in some sense' Romans, we obscure distinctions that mattered enormously at the time.

Docile Bodies

Over time, more and more of Rome's subjects were successful in obtaining citizenship. I have already suggested that one reason the

Roman world did hold together during the third-century crisis was a sense on the part of enough of Rome's subjects that this was their world. It is also clear that in many ways the lifestyles of provincial populations came to converge, not on a single or uniform imperial culture, but into a world structured by these very Roman differences, differences based on the gradations of education and status and cultural competence that Paul (or rather the author of Luke–Acts and his readers) understood so well. Enfranchisement, loyalty, and acculturation are not the same thing, but they were deeply interconnected.

For most parts of the empire, the best evidence for the emergence of Roman habits and attitudes is provided by material culture. Consider Roman baths. Roman bathhouses are very distinctive structures; architects, archaeologists, and cultural historians have studied examples from all over the empire.¹⁰ Greeks too had taken baths: their nakedness had shocked the Elder Cato. But facilities for collective bathing were fairly rudimentary before the last century BC. One reason was technological. Few Greek cities had aqueducts before the Principate and hydraulic concrete was only developed in Campania just before the turn of the millennium. (Greeks had had to use hip baths, which were a rather subsidiary part of exercise spaces.) Eventually bath complexes would also exploit new techniques for covering vast enclosed spaces, and would use bricks and tiles to create spaces heated through warmed floors and by circulating air, and in the grandest examples would create glassed solaria. But the spread of bathing was not just a matter of technology. It also stands for the emergence of a new consensus about cleanliness, health, and beauty. Those ideas can be traced in other ways: the spread of toilet sets, mirrors, and cosmetics, the appearance of standardized hairstyles in statuary, and so on; but let us stick with baths for the moment.

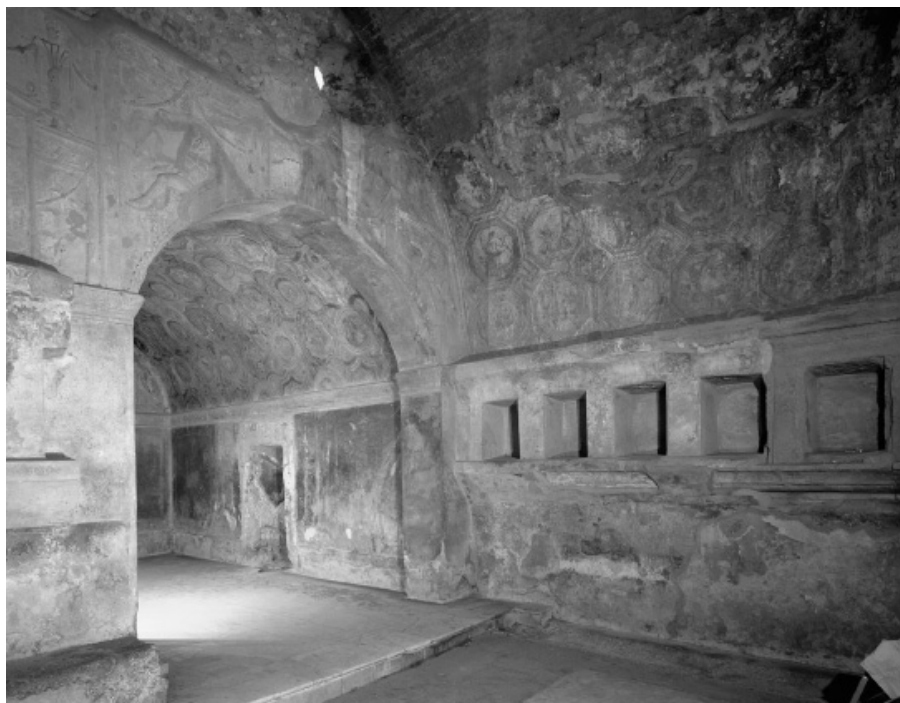


Fig. 18. The Stabian Baths at Pompeii

The rich had been the first to develop bathing into a central part of a civilized lifestyle. Unsurprising the first luxurious bathhouses were created in the Bay of Naples in the last century BC, just when so much else of Roman elite culture was being remodelled.¹¹ Yet even before the end of the Republic, bathing culture was becoming popular in other sectors of society. Public bathhouses, which anyone could pay to use, appeared next. The Stabian Baths in Pompeii are one of the earliest known examples. During Augustus' reign, Agrippa incorporated grand baths into his park on the Field of Mars. Even more spectacular complexes, usually called *thermae*, were built in Rome by the emperors Titus and Trajan, Caracalla and Diocletian: they included exercise grounds, swimming pools, saunas, and elaborate displays of the kind of sculpture that Pompey had placed in the porticoes of his theatre. Even today the surviving shell of Diocletian's baths houses a museum and a couple of churches, while the Baths of Caracalla are the venue for open-air operas and concerts. These imperial benefactions to the capital were the grandest example of a style of civic benefaction known from all the greatest cities of the empire.

Greek cities like Ephesus and Sardis have produced monumental evidence for a variation on this theme, bath complexes combined with gymnasia. The gymnasium had in the classical period been the setting

for elite education and leisure: exercise and discussion took place here in a more public setting than the symposium. But in the new lands conquered by Alexander, where Greeks were usually a privileged (and sometimes embattled) urban minority, the gymnasium had become central to a certain definition of Hellenic culture. Greek education and Greek identity operated in these societies as a culture of exclusion, more than as the marker for a particular ethnic group. Athleticism was central to this identity. Festivals 'equal to the Olympics' were set up by benefactors all over the Greek world, young aristocrats competed in them for prestige rather than cash prizes, professional athletes also emerged, and athleticism became a focus for certain kinds of Greek literature.¹² The civic elites of Roman Egypt were even known as the gymnasia classes, so central were these spaces to that kind of elite culture that looked to Greek models which had in fact become widespread only under Rome: they were also, or claimed to be, hereditary and quite separate from the Egyptians among whom they lived. Everywhere gymnasia became a focus for monumental architecture, and the gymnasiarch became an important figure in civic society. Long list of regulations survive from cities all over the Greek world, showing how gymnasia had come to be thought of as key sites where new citizens were produced and trained. Bathing fitted easily into this complex of associations.

But baths were popular everywhere. Soldiers had bathhouses provided for them in the larger camps, which had come in any case to resemble cities: some British examples are equipped with indoor exercise grounds in place of the open *palaestra* common in the Mediterranean. Where hot springs were discovered, medical establishments were set up. Wealthy landowners built small bath suites in their rural homes, although they were probably only in use when the owner was present. Pliny the Younger describes arriving late at one of his villas and deciding, as an expression of his consideration and lack of pride, to use the baths in the local town rather than have his own fired up. Bathing had by now become incorporated into aristocratic lifestyles, a social activity that divided the day of work from the evening of leisure. Other adopters included sanctuaries and especially healing centres, and medical writers have a great deal to say about the advantages of bathing (only slightly undermined by their lack of understanding of infection). But we are dealing, after all, with ideology. The habits and ideals of cleanliness had become integral to notions of the self and of civilization that the empire propagated. No extant texts declare that dirty bodies are barbarian bodies—although trousers and beards receive some mild abuse—but upwardly mobile provincials could hardly ignore Roman notions of what constituted civilized standards.

A similar story could be told about food. It would include the spread of the elaborate manners that surrounded meals; the popularization of wine-drinking; new styles of cooking, including a preference for bread wheats over other grains; the creation of new dinner services in ceramic and plate; the evidence for imports of newly essential ingredients such as olive oil, pepper, fish-sauce, and Mediterranean fruits; and the centrality of the evening meal in Roman society and in Latin literature.¹³ The new ways of life, or lifeworlds, that had come to be widely shared across the empire had many other dimensions. There was a new culture of lighting, one made possible by glass windows in the south and in the north by the spread of lamps and the oil used as fuel: the evening became a new space of time available for work or leisure. New kinds of dress were developed, along with new notions of posture and etiquette of gesture. And of course there was the influence of education—never widespread, but no longer restricted to scribes either—and the effects on provincial children of learning Latin and Greek from Cicero and Virgil, Homer and the tragedians, and of learning to speak in public in a particular way. But I will not labour the point. If what we are considering is a change of identity, it is mostly the kind of identity created by routines and training, an embodied sense of self rather than a set of abstract concepts about ‘Romanness’. The relationship between these learned ideals of the good life and political action is complex. But barbarian raiders in the third century had nothing much to offer in replacement of all this, and perhaps were not interested in doing so, while the groups who moved into the empire in the late fourth and fifth centuries were already convinced of the superiority of Roman ways and simply wanted them for themselves. The transformation of everyday life, in other words, was profound and it had profound effects.

Identities and Empires

Most studies of identity politics in the Roman Empire have concentrated on the largest scale, on identities such as ‘Romans’ and ‘Greeks’, and on conscious statements about their attitudes to each other. Great progress has been made in this area in recent years. The enormous range of Greek responses to empire has been explored in particular detail, through studies of explicit statements in literary texts; through discussion of how the opposition between the two was constructed through discursive and rhetorical practices; and by playing material culture off against literature.¹⁴ Roman ideals are also clearer now, especially the extent to which the conscious efforts of generation after generation of cultural leaders were focused not on

creating an alternative, parallel high culture to that of Greece, but rather a universalizing civilization (usually called *humanitas*) in which Greek and Roman both had a part.¹⁵

Greek and western elites seem now to have a good deal in common; including a shared commitment to rehearsing their differences. Perhaps we should have suspected this, given that many of the Greek writers of the second and third century—including Arrian and Dio—were Roman senators as well as fans of the classical Greek past, while many of their western contemporaries, including Aulus Gellius, Fronto, and the emperors Hadrian and Marcus, were deeply involved in Greek culture and writing. Two educational systems coexisted, and many members of the civic elites were presumably comfortable only in one. Yet most Greeks must have known and used much more Latin than they ever allowed in their classicizing compositions. The historical researches of the Greek historians of the imperial period are inconceivable without a good knowledge of Latin. Most telling of all is the broad unity of elite material culture across the Mediterranean world, especially expressed in their residences, urban and rural alike. No one who comes to elite culture through the elaborate mosaic art of their dining rooms, with its elaborate references to food and myth, astrology and hunting, gladiators and philosophers; or their taste in marble statuary, where gods and monsters and kings and poets jostle for space; or the wall paintings that open up imaginary vistas over cities and landscapes, or make play with stage scenery, or portray gardens full of life; could imagine for a moment that there were two high cultures rather than one in the Roman Empire.¹⁶ Many regional variations existed, of course. But the overwhelming impression is of a single world of the imagination, one accessible through art and literature whether one was in Sicily or southern France, Syria or Asia Minor, in North Africa or in Germany.

Identity politics looks very different in discussions of modern imperialisms. There the focus is not on the emergence of vast imperial identities, but rather on how imperial regimes have shaped local experiences; on the emergence of newly self-conscious peoples and nations; on diasporas and displacements; and on how the experience of migration has impacted on the lives of countless individuals. Cosmopolitanism, cultural hybridity, and the persistence of economic and cultural domination after the end of formal empire are central topics in post-colonial studies. Enormous differences clearly existed between the long-lasting, but fundamentally weak, empires of antiquity, and the short-lived but phenomenally powerful ones of the last few hundred years. Ancient imperialisms never effected population transfers on the scale either of the transport of Africans to the New World as slaves; or the establishment of populations of south

Asian origin in Africa, Europe, and North America; or the spread of communities of east Asian origin around the Pacific; let alone the colonization of much of the world's temperate zones by people of European origin. Modern empires established vast inequalities of wealth that persist today. Because of their impact on public health, and because they exported cash-cropping and industrialization into their peripheries, they set in train enormous changes in the global environment. Cosmopolitanism in the modern world is linked to the creation of huge cities, in both the developed and underdeveloped worlds. Any comparison with antiquity has to bear those differences in mind.

Post-colonial approaches to classical antiquity and an interest in processes of globalization processes and localization in the Roman world are relatively new, but a few recent studies indicate their potential.¹⁷ Long before Rome expanded, both the Mediterranean world and its continental hinterlands experienced population movements of various kinds.¹⁸ Nevertheless, Roman imperialism presided over what were probably unprecedented levels of human mobility in the ancient Mediterranean world. The slave trade; the recruitment, redeployment, and resettlement of soldiers; and the growth of cities all played a part. We should probably imagine net flows of humans into the core provinces, especially into the most urbanized regions, since ancient cities certainly had higher death rates than birth rates, and relied on immigration to sustain their populations. Roman authorities also occasionally moved tribal populations across frontiers. Missionaries, pilgrims, traders, travelling scholars, and craftsmen all travelled back and forth across the empire, many at least intending to return home.¹⁹ When they did not, their tombstones provide precious information about their travels, while a range of techniques for analysing skeletal material provide objective evidence.²⁰ Alongside this can be set the legal and documentary evidence for efforts to respond to human mobility, and to control it: Greek cities had already developed regulation for *metoikoi* (resident aliens) and western ones began to impose financial obligations on wealthy *incolae* (inhabitants of a community whose formally registered place of origin was elsewhere).²¹ Diasporas of Jews and Syrians and Greeks are reasonably well attested during the empire.²² Very often it is the spread of the worship of particular gods that provides the best evidence for diaspora communities across the empire.²³ Atargatis, known as Dea Syria, the Syrian goddess, eventually attracted other worshippers, but it looks as if the founders of her temples in the Aegean and in Italy were actual migrants. Synagogues are known throughout the Roman east, and in some parts of the west as well. The fact that cult centres were established in new

locations suggests not only semi-permanent populations, but also groups who maintained contacts with fellow immigrants from the same areas. All major Roman cities contained minorities within them, and where there is abundant epigraphic evidence as in the Vesuvian cities, Ostia, and some North African ports, these communities are highly visible.

But there is little sign of any positive value being placed on hybridity or multiculturalism by the host societies. Although the rich spent a good deal acquiring exotic foreign raw materials, from Indian Ocean spices to silk, they were not interested in consuming alien cuisine, or dressing in new ways influenced by foreign styles. Jews and Isis worshippers were both hounded out of Rome in the late Republic. The upwardly mobile took care to lose their regional accents. Only Greek orators could make capital out of their exotic origins: Lucian stressed his 'Assyrian' identity, and Favorinus of Arles stated that one of the paradoxes of his life was that although he was a Gaul, he could 'play the Greek'. But what they were stressing was the cultural distance they had travelled. Septimius Severus allegedly would not let his sister come to Rome even when he was emperor, because he was embarrassed by her African speech.

Being part of an empire also had more subtle effects on the identities claimed by different peoples in the empire. Theorists of globalization today point out that increased connectivity has often had the effect of making a group more conscious of its distinctive location within the whole. It has been suggested that both Greeks and Jews came to formulate their distinctive identities in new ways that responded to the wider imperial world in which they lived.²⁴ Some aspects of Jewish life, from the use of Greek to a form of worship based on scriptures rather than the rituals of the Temple in Jerusalem, were more portable and so easier to replicate in a Greek or Roman city. Greek education too was more transferable than rituals based on ancestral shrines. Isis worshippers could use hieroglyphs in their rituals, and even imported Nile water, but they could not orient cult on the flooding of the river. Many cults came to resemble each other in their outward-looking faces, while remaining (or even becoming more) distinctive in terms of what worshippers did or knew on the inside. Diasporic populations were not the only ones to find new identities in the empire. Local communities in east and west developed parallel myth-histories, peopled with Trojan and Greek founding fathers and a range of similar tropes, the local princess who marries the refugee prince, the oracle that points to the spot where the city should be founded. This myth-making was an ancient tradition, but it flourished in all parts of the Roman world.²⁵

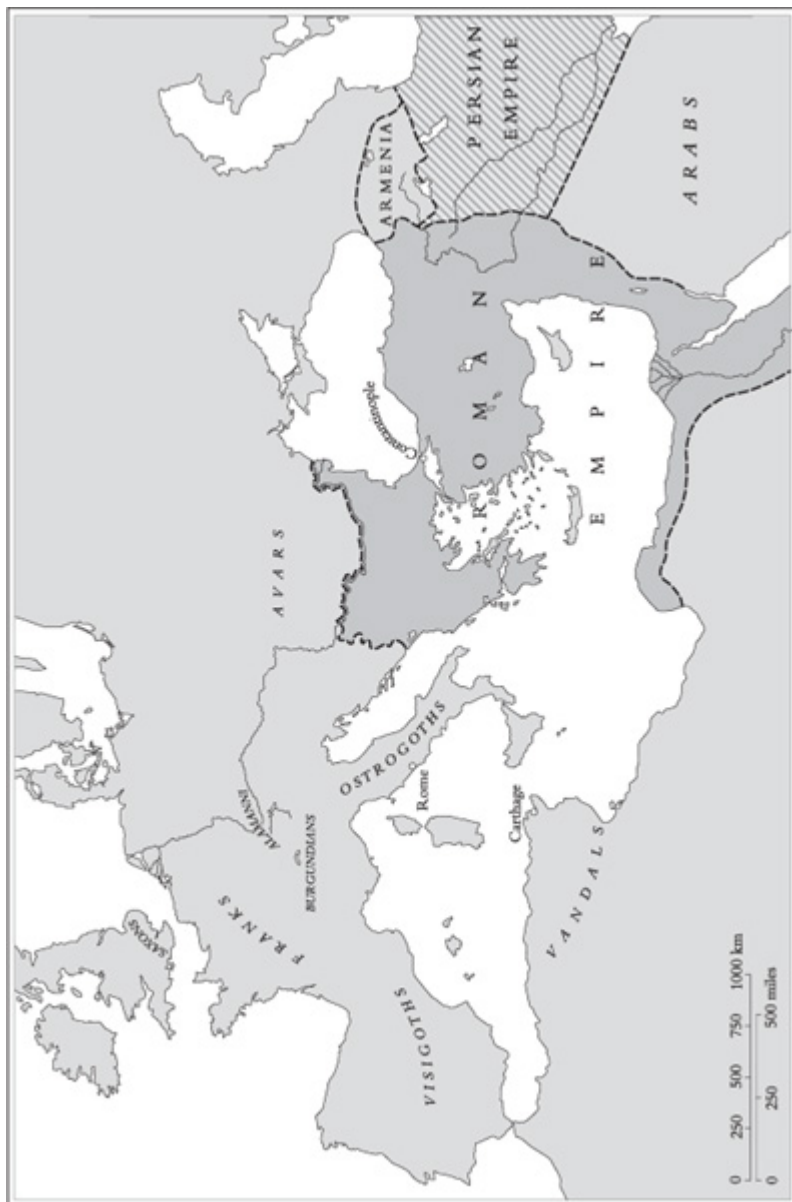
Further Reading

Almost no topic in Roman history has generated as much recent research as the subject of this chapter, although there has been some confusion between attempts to examine the broad social and economic consequences of Roman rule; studies of collective identities as consciously experienced phenomena, as expressed in texts, monuments, and material culture; and investigations of the means by which loyalty and solidarity were generated among the emperors' subjects. Those issues are clearly linked, but they are not the same.

Studies of the impact of Roman rule vary considerably, especially in how they treat cultural phenomena. Examples include Martin Millett's *Romanization of Britain* (Cambridge, 1990), Nico Roymans's *Tribal Societies in Northern Gaul* (Amsterdam, 1990), Susan Alcock's *Graecia capta* (Cambridge, 1993), David Mattingly's *An Imperial Possession* (London, 2006), Andrew Wallace-Hadrill's *Roman Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge, 2008) and my own *Becoming Roman* (Cambridge, 1998); they offer a selection of approaches, all employing archaeological data, generally in combination with other evidence. So too do two collections, Tom Blagg and Martin Millett's *Early Roman Empire in the West* (Oxford, 2000) and Susan Alcock's *Early Roman Empire in the East* (Oxford, 1997). It would be easy to add to this list.

Conscious expressions of Roman identity are the subject of Emma Dench's *Romulus' Asylum* (Oxford, 2005) while Simon Swain's *Hellenism and Empire* (Oxford, 1996) and Simon Goldhill's *Being Greek under Rome* (Cambridge, 2001) investigate the identity politics of the empire's best-documented subject people. Seth Schwartz's *Imperialism and Jewish Society* (Princeton, 2001) asks some of the same questions about the second best-known case. Fergus Millar's *Roman Near East* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993) opens up a vast field of study, one mostly known from inscriptions written in a bewildering variety of languages. By far the most thoughtful examination so far of how cultural identity, political power, law, and social solidarity were connected during the early empire is Clifford Ando's *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley, 2000).

Most recently attention has focused on how particular groups within the empire developed common identities often based on social memory. Three recent collections give an idea of the state of the question: Ton Derks and Nico Roymans's *Ethnic Constructs in Antiquity* (Amsterdam, 2009), Tim Whitmarsh's *Local Knowledge and Microidentities in the Imperial Greek World* (Cambridge, 2010), and Erich Gruen's *Cultural Identities in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Los Angeles, 2011), which includes much else besides.



Map 6. The empire in the year 500 AD

KEY DATES IN CHAPTER XV

- Reign of Constantine**
- The Great Persecution**
- Reign of Constantine**
- Constantine's Edict of Toleration**
- Constantine's Edict of Nicaea**

Reign of Julian

Val 376 allows parties of Goths to cross the Danube, beginning the events leading to the defeat of the eastern Roman army at Adrianople

On 395 death of Theodosius the empire is ruled by Honorius in the west and Arcadius in the east, both of them minors

Reign 409-75 conquest of Iberian peninsula by Visigoths

Reign 410 sacked by the Goths

Var 429 invade Africa, capturing Carthage in ad 439

Con 455 *Notitia Dignitatum*

The 442-52 led by Attila, ravage the Balkans, Gaul, and Italy

Reign 455 sacked by the Vandals

Reign 476 eastern emperor deposed by Odoacer the Ostrogoth

XV

RECOVERY AND COLLAPSE

When Polybius of Megalopolis decided to make a record of the most significant events of his own day, he thought it was appropriate to begin by demonstrating on the basis of the facts, that the Romans did not win a great empire in the six hundred years following the foundation of the city, even though they were regularly at war with their neighbours for all this period. On the contrary, that occurred only after they had captured a part of Italy and then lost it once again after the invasion of Hannibal, the defeat at Cannae, and only after they had actually seen from their walls the enemy threatening. Only then did they begin to be so favoured by fortune, that in less than fifty-three years, they took control not only of all Italy but all Africa as well. The Iberians of the west submitted to them. Setting out on an even greater project they crossed the Adriatic, conquered the Greeks, and dissolved the empire of Macedon, capturing alive their king and carrying him off to Rome as a prisoner. Nobody could attribute this success to human might alone. The explanation must lie in the immutable plan of the Fates, the influence of the planets, or the will of God that favours all human enterprises so long as they are just. For these things establish a pattern of causation that leads future events to come out in just such a way, that shows just how right they are who believe that human affairs are subject to some kind of Divine Providence. So that when their energy is aroused, they flourish; but when they become displeasing to the gods, their affairs decline to a state like that which now exists. The truth of this proposition will be demonstrated by the events I will now relate.

(Zosimus, *New History* 1.1.1–2)

Emperors and Christians

The Emperor Diocletian ruled from AD 284 to 305. Constantine I from 306 to 337. They were not the only emperors who reigned during this

half-century, and civil wars characterized the reigns of both. But the length of their reigns is a sure sign of increased imperial stability. Another sign is that the frontiers, although never peaceful, held. The military crisis that had nearly resulted in imperial meltdown seemed to have been averted. It was once common to write about the reigns of these two emperors in terms of transformation, reform, and recovery. But that is too simple. The institutions of the Roman Empire were indeed transformed: but many of their ‘reforms’ were unsuccessful, and the recovery was partial and, in the west, short-lived.

One transformation in particular affects all histories of this period. During the second and early third centuries AD the religious diversity of the empire had gradually resolved into a world of competing religions. How that happened is the subject of the next chapter, but its consequences have to be explored here. During the nadir of the military crisis, the 250s, the emperors Decius and Valerian had each tried to use general hostility against Christians to create a wider sense of imperial unity. Diocletian’s response was more extreme. His Great Persecution was a systematic attempt to eliminate Christianity, and it traumatized great swathes of the empire between AD 303 and 311. Constantine’s tactic was the opposite, to first tolerate the new religion, then protect, sponsor, patronize, and eventually seek to regulate and unify it through an ecumenical council held in 325 at Nicaea. History still remembers Diocletian as the Persecutor, Constantine as the Convert. Greek and Roman historians took radically different views of these events, depending on whether they embraced the new religion (as did the bishop Eusebius of Caesarea who invented a church history and wrote a panegyric life of Constantine) or whether they deplored the abandonment of the ancestral religion, as did Zosimus whose verdict stands at the head of this chapter.

The divided reaction of historians mirrored the divided response of the empire’s elite. Before the end of the third century AD there had been many kinds of historical writing in Greek and in Latin—local and global histories, total histories of Rome, contemporary histories, and histories that were more like a series of imperial biographies placed end to end. Some historians and biographers stressed the mythological and the marvellous, others were closer to satire and scandal-sheets. But all reflected a set of common ideals about the role of the emperor. Those ideals were a blend of Greek ideologies of kingship, and Roman notions of good citizenship. Good emperors were just, were successful in battle, deferred to tradition, respected the rights (especially the property rights) of the elite, were modest, merciful, and did not raise new taxes. Their sex lives were dull and unimpeachable. Bad emperors had all the opposite vices: think Caligula, Nero, Domitian, or Commodus.¹ Now one new criterion trumped all the others. How did

he stand with the Church? Was he a persecutor or a protector, and then later was he orthodox or a heretic?

No historian was neutral. Christians celebrated Constantine as a saint and the second founder of the empire, and they savagely condemned those emperors, like Diocletian and Galerius, whom they remembered most of all as persecutors. Perhaps this is understandable for the generation that lived through the Great Persecution and Constantine's patronage of the Church. Lactantius was an African rhetor, summoned by Diocletian to teach at his eastern capital of Nicomedia and then sacked in the persecution of 303. But he moved west, and survived to tutor the eldest son of Constantine. Towards the end of his life, Lactantius composed the grisly *On the Deaths of the Persecutors* which recounted the gruesome punishments God reserved for Galerius, Diocletian, and the others. Eusebius and Lactantius offered a new vision of imperial history as part of God's unfolding plan. Conversely, those writers who were not Christians deplored the decreased support for civic cults, the casual licence given to acts of violence against their temples, and what they saw as the ruinous consequences of abandoning the gods.²

But if we set aside—for just a moment—the matter of their contrasting attitudes to the emergence of competing religions, neither Diocletian nor Constantine was entirely unlike the emperors who had preceded them in the last years of the third century AD.

Both, to begin with, were soldier emperors. Like many of the emperors and would-be emperors who rose and fell during the third century, Diocletian (Diocles by birth) originated in the Balkans. Nothing certain is known about him until his entry into history as the commander of the Emperor Numerianus' bodyguard in 283. Numerianus' father Carus was a praetorian prefect who had rebelled against Probus in 282. Carus was killed in 283—we do not know how or by whom—and Numerianus ruled for only one year before being murdered in his turn by his own praetorian prefect, Aper, but it was Diocles whom the army hailed as Augustus. So far, so conventional. Equally conventional was Diocletian's first campaign, against Carus' other son (and Numerianus' co-emperor) Carinus whom he defeated and killed in 285. For most of the next decade he fought, first on the eastern frontier, then on the upper Danube, then back in the east, while his ally Maximian, who came from a similar lowly background also in the Balkans, served first as his Caesar and then as his fellow Augustus, mostly on the western frontier. The collaboration became formalized and more complex in 293 when the two adopted two younger generals, Galerius and Constantius, as their Caesars. The four emperors (the tetrarchs) successfully worked together until 305 when, on Diocletian's initiative, the two Augusti stepped down, the two

Caesars replaced them, and appointed two new Caesars. For most of Diocletian's more than twenty-year-long reign he and his fellow emperors moved back and forth between bases along the northern and eastern frontiers, and for most of the time they were at war with the enemies of Rome.

The success of the tetrarchs depended in part on the achievements of earlier soldier emperors like Gallienus and Aurelian. Roman armies were now better adapted to war against the northern barbarians, the cities of the east were now fortified bases, and, unlike the emperors of the mid-third century, Diocletian and Maximian were able to fight most of their wars on the frontier or on foreign territory. The great innovation was solidarity within the imperial college. The succession of coups and failed coups which ultimately brought Diocles to power was largely suppressed, although it took a while to control Britain. Diocletian invested heavily in ceremonial and titles, but perhaps it was his military success that ensured he faced fewer challenges. Once secure it was possible for him to make other changes, building more defences, and increasing the size of the army, while in order to support this he modified its command structure, and the way provinces were governed and taxed. These changes were not the implementation of a grand plan, but the cumulation of pragmatic expedients. Many built on the more successful experiments of earlier emperors, all of them were focused on the needs of the army.

The joint abdication of 305 marked the end of consensus. Even before Diocletian's death, probably in 312, the carefully plotted succession plan began to unravel. Among the changes were the death of Constantius in 306, only a year after his elevation to the rank of Augustus, and the succession of his son Constantine. Constantine the Great himself died in 337, but he was sole emperor for only the last of his three decades in power. Before then, relations between the emperors shifted back and forth for a decade, a decade in which Constantine himself campaigned against the Franks. By the end of 312 a new pattern had begun to emerge. Galerius was dead (devoured by worms if you believe Lactantius, but not before he had formally ended the Great Persecution with an Edict of Toleration); Constantine had won a decisive victory over his rival Maxentius at the battle of the Milvian Bridge which gave him control of Rome; and he had formed an alliance with Licinius, who was able to eliminate his rival Maximin Dia the next year. The alliance with Licinius was a stormy one, but it was not until 325 that Constantine was able to defeat and execute him and rule alone. By then Constantine had celebrated twenty years in power, and begun the creation of a great new capital on the site of Byzantium, to be called Constantinople. The final decade of his life was divided between wars on the Danube. and trying to create a new

college of emperors from his three surviving sons (he had had a fourth, Crispus, executed in 326) and nephews. Like Diocletian he had spent much of his reign engaged in foreign wars.

It is difficult to say whether Diocletian spent more energy trying to suppress Christianity than Constantine expended on trying to reconcile its factions. Early after his public sponsorship of Christianity he was drawn into the bitter Donatist schism in Africa, and one reason for the Council of Nicaea was an attempt to develop a single view on the nature of Christ, a response to what became known as the Arian heresy. Christian writers, Eusebius above all, focused their attention on Constantine's relations with the Church, his personal journey, his building projects, and the Council. Yet like Diocletian before him, he was also concerned with changing the military and civilian command structure, with raising taxes, and with changes to the coinage. Diocletian and Constantine were both extraordinarily successful members of a new species of emperor, one that had emerged during the third century. It is convenient to call them soldier emperors, but they were also exceptional managers who seem to have thought of the empire first, rather than the city of Rome, let alone the Senate and people. Neither spent much time in the interior of the empire or Rome itself. The old aristocratic orders of senators and equestrians were marginal to their attention. As for religion, perhaps they were motivated by feelings of resentment or passionate conversion. Who can say? But their policies—persecution, toleration, and promotion alike—were all about imperial unity. Constantine in particular had plenty of opportunities to play the zealot, especially against heretics, but he resisted them all. Bishops felt themselves influential at his court—and so some were—but it is difficult to identify any area of policy where Constantine's commitment to Christ did not also serve his vision for the empire.

The only emperor after Constantine who was not a Christian was his nephew Julian, born just six years before Constantine's death in 337. Julian's childhood was lived against the background of civil wars conducted among Constantine's heirs. Within a year of Constantine's death two of his nephews had been murdered and the empire was divided between Constans, Constantine II, and Constantius II. Constans defeated and killed Constantine II in 340 and for ten years divided the empire with Constantius II. Constans himself was killed by a usurper in 350. By 351 Constantius II was sole Augustus, a position he held until his death in 361. For much of this time Julian was kept out of public life. But when his brother Gallus was made junior emperor, with the title of Caesar, in 351 his own return to public life must have seemed inevitable. Gallus was executed for treachery in 354. The next year Julian was made Caesar in turn and given a

command in Gaul. We can only speculate on the effects on Julian of this history of familial murders and intrigue. But we do know that in his twenties, partly as a result of his own reading and partly under the influence of the philosopher Maximus of Ephesus, he rejected the (Arian) Christianity in which he had been brought up and secretly embraced—not too strong a term in his case—a very idiosyncratic and highly intellectualized version of what he regarded as the ancestral religion, a broad polytheism in which the gods of the Romans, the Greeks, and the Jews all had their place. He called this Hellenism. It is difficult for us to avoid the name the Christians gave it, paganism. But the cults of the ancestral gods never formed the kind of connected organized entity we usually mean by religion except in the imagination of Christian writers. It is an irony of Julian's vision that the nature of the paganism he tried to restore and institutionalize, both its cosmological coherence and the charitable institutions he wished to encourage, is one of the clearest testimonies of his Christian upbringing.

Given the history of Constantine's family no one can have been surprised that in 361 Julian rebelled against Constantius II. Only the latter's death prevented another civil war. But when it transpired that Julian was not only not a Christian, but was a passionate advocate of the ancestral religion, the empire went into shock. Along with wars against Persia and hostilities with his brothers, Constantius II had also been embroiled in the great religious controversy of the age, inspired by the teaching of Arius, that Jesus, the Son, was completely subordinated to the Father. Constantine had tried to impose a compromise at the great council of bishops assembled at Nicaea in 325, but the controversy simmered on. Now, suddenly, all that was swept away. Julian's court honoured Neoplatonist philosophers, not bishops. During his brief reign he wrote feverishly about his ideas, tried to ban Christians from teaching, restored funding to civic cults, planned to rebuild Jerusalem, and attempted to reorganize the old cults as a kind of counter-church. The opposition he faced from all sides showed the deep penetration of Christian ideology and the empire, especially among the ruling classes. Would Julian have made more progress if he had not died in 363 of a wound sustained in a new Persian war? It is impossible to say. As it was, the memory of 'the Apostate' was reviled, and his successors threw themselves enthusiastically back into their struggles with the bishops over orthodoxy.

Did that settle it? The reign of Julian seemed to have showed that although the old gods still had some devotees, Constantine's transformation of the empire's institutions had gone too far to be reversed. But proponents of the ancestral religion had one last

moment in which to denounce Christ and his followers. For in the century that followed Julian's death, a slow-moving disaster engulfed the Roman Empire. Diocletian, Constantine, Constantius II, Julian, and his successor Jovian all fought wars against the Persians and these continued into the fifth century. These wars consumed resources and lives without leading to any radical shifts of power between the 'brother emperors'. Over time the two empires would come to seem more and more alike.³ Conflict between them would continue off and on until the Persian Empire was destroyed by the Arabs in the seventh century, while the Romans narrowly escaped the same fate. But the avalanche fell from the north, not the east. The Roman recovery at the end of the third century had seen Gallienus, Claudius II, Aurelian, Probus, and finally Diocletian campaigning against various northern peoples. The invasions of the empire had been stopped, but at the cost of the surrender of Trajan's Dacian provinces in what is now Romania. The empire was now bordered by peoples transformed by generations of contact with Rome, contact that included trade and military service as well as war. There were even missionaries operating north of the frontier. The Goths were partly converted to (Arian) Christianity in the middle of the fourth century. But at the end of the century these peoples themselves found themselves under pressure from the north and east.

The new arrivals were the Huns. All reports present them as completely unlike Romans or Goths, a highly mobile nomadic people, moving westward very rapidly, in the same way that Cimmerians and Scythians had in the early Iron Age and Tartars and Mongols would in the Middle Ages and the early modern period. They clearly terrified the settled agricultural communities they conquered. They first appear in the 370s, somewhere north of the Black Sea, and pressed westwards. It is impossible to assess quite how novel or serious was the threat posed by the Huns. The empire remained weaker than it had been before the third-century military crisis. The Goths experienced pull factors—their desire for wealth as well as security within the empire—as well as the push factors generated by the Hunnic invasion. Either way, groups of Goths sought permission to cross into the empire and in 376 the emperor Valens allowed them in. Could he have stopped them? Again it is impossible to know. But when two years later he faced them in battle at Adrianople he lost his life and most of the eastern army. A chain reaction set in, more groups crossed the Rhine and Danube frontiers, and emperors were increasingly reduced to making concessions to some groups of northerners as the only defence against others. By the 450s the Huns were campaigning under their king Attila in the Balkans, in northern France, and even in Italy. On Attila's death in 453 his fragile empire

collapsed under a mixture of internal rivalry and rebellion from its subjects. In this too it resembles other nomad empires throughout history.⁴ But the political landscape they left behind was changed forever.

By the end of the fifth century, half the Roman Empire was occupied by barbarian kingdoms. The military power and fiscal resources of the eastern empire were crippled beyond repair. Back in the darkest days of the Mithridatic War, the Romans had briefly lost control of all territory east of the Adriatic. Now, 500 years later, all the territory *west* of the Adriatic had been lost. The city of Rome itself had been sacked twice by barbarian hordes. The empire that Rome had created had ballooned in the late Republic to encompass the whole Mediterranean. Now the balloon had deflated, leaving Rome on the outside. The historian Zosimus—writing around AD 500 in Constantinople, the city founded on the Bosphorus by Constantine as New Rome and now the sole capital of what was left of the empire—set out to chronicle Rome’s decline and fall, presenting it as a matching narrative to Polybius’ account of Rome’s rise to empire. For Zosimus, the decline in Rome’s fortunes was the direct consequence of Constantine’s disastrous desertion of the traditional gods of Rome.

A New Empire?

Historians today frequently contrast the empire of the fourth and fifth centuries with that of the first three centuries AD. We write of ‘late’ or ‘later’ empire, or in French *haut* (high) as opposed to early or *bas* (low)-*empire*. Some of these labels indicate an unarticulated assumption that the empire of the first three centuries was primary, and later versions of Roman power secondary. Terming late antiquity ‘post-classical’ is an explicit statement to this effect, as is writing of Rome’s inheritance or of the transformation of the classical world. Historical change is, of course, the only real constant. No age stays the same. But some ages are more conscious of change than others, and modern phraseology reflects some ancient preoccupations.

The later Roman Empire was, in some respects at least, self-consciously past its prime. A group of historians writing in Greek of whom the most important are Eunapius, Olympiodorus, and Zosimus are for this reason often termed ‘classicizing’.⁵ Taking Greek literature produced in the fifth and fourth centuries BC as stylistic models was not in itself new. The second-century AD orators of what we, following their third-century biographer Philostratus, term the *Second Sophistic* were given that label for precisely this reason. They strove to speak an ‘Attic’ Greek that was quite different from the spoken language even

of the elite who had studied these works at school.⁶ Latin loanwords were shunned and so were Greek neologisms. Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, composed in the late first century AD, paired great Greeks with great Romans. The Greeks were mostly figures from the fifth and fourth centuries BC, and none post-dated the Roman conquest: the Romans were all figures from the Republic. Two classical eras were set in parallel while the early empire was deemed post-classical for both Greece and Rome. Arrian of Nicomedia governed Cappadocia in the reign of Hadrian, but wrote in the style of Xenophon. Cassius Dio, another Bithynian Greek senator this time of the Severan period, composed a *Roman History* in which the thought and language of Thucydides is never very far below the surface.⁷ But the classicism of late antiquity was different. Zosimus' engagement is more elegiac, as if the classical past is gone forever. Moreover, Zosimus, Eunapius, and the others were self-consciously not writing a Christianized version of history, a version that was in some ways becoming the official narrative. Late Latin literature too was preoccupied with its relation to a Latin canon, one based around the works of Cicero and Virgil.⁸ That was already true of the Gallic panegyrists in the late third century.

By the second half of the fourth century AD Ausonius and his contemporary Ammianus Marcellinus, the greatest Latin historian of late antiquity, offer perspectives quite similar to their Greek counterparts. Again, it was not new to focus on the classics: early imperial Latin was preoccupied with them and a series of explicitly post-Virgilian epics were composed by Roman senators in the course of the first century AD. But by late antiquity, the age of Augustus and Trajan seemed far away. Ammianus, a pagan member of the military elite, chronicled the noble but futile exercise of traditional virtues and especially the reign of Julian, whom he greatly if not uncritically admired. Much of his narrative seems very familiar—intrigues at court, battles against barbarians in the north, the great rumbling hostility with Persia—but the world he moves through is already partly ruined, its cities sacked, its Senate decayed, its civilization haunted by literary ghosts of a happier time.

That pessimism, largely expressed by representatives of the propertied classes, needs to be tempered against the realities of the restoration of stability by warrior emperors, pagan and Christian alike. Civic elites and the Senate were not generally winners in the reorganization of the empire. Senators had lost their role in government, and had little access to the emperors ruling from Trier or Sirmium or even Milan and Constantinople. The growing bureaucracy around the court alienated many, especially in the west, and taxation was heavier.⁹ Many of the distinctive features of the empire of the fourth and fifth centuries could be seen as the culmination of long-

term trends, either established during the generation-long military emergency of the mid-third century, or even earlier. The development of the imperial court and its transformation into a mobile institution can be traced back to Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius. Once military affairs drew emperors to the frontiers, the role of the Senate inevitably became marginalized. Senators who wished to take a role in public life became generals and courtiers. Imperial edicts replaced senatorial decrees as a source of law and ambassadors now came to the court, not to Rome, for practical reasons. Precedents can be traced back to the reign of Augustus.

Yet there was something new, and it was recognized as such. The empire that emerged from the crisis was ruled by a group, or college, of emperors. Each was based in his own court, and each had responsibility for a share of the army and of the provinces. Each was, as a result, able to act more effectively in relation to his subjects: how they did it is documented in a vast amount of documentation.¹⁰ The number of provinces had grown slightly over the third century. Diocletian increased their number and grouped them together into larger units, assigning oversight of the administration to one or other of the praetorian prefects. Eventually there were four great prefectures each managing a quarter of the empire and a wing of the bureaucracy that gathered taxes and organized government directly, with less and less involvement from either senators or local elites.¹¹ That move towards a more centralized form of government built on developments in the tax system that I have already described. It also helped the emperors extract more revenue to supply slightly larger armies. Probably unintentionally, it also made some regions effectively self-sufficient: the taxes needed for a region's defence were typically raised locally. That development would make fragmentation easier in the future.

The changes introduced by Diocletian and modified by Constantine were unpopular with many members of traditional elites. But the growing bureaucracy provided many opportunities for educated provincials and even for some barbarian leaders to join in a new ruling class. Once recruited they were rapidly socialized and created their own traditional ways of doing things, ways they would staunchly defend against further changes in the sixth century.¹² Roman bureaucracy was probably not fantastically efficient. This was not a modern state, patronage remained important and corruption endemic.¹³ But its internal dynamics had changed.

The multiplication of emperors and so of courts responded to the realization that a single emperor could not be everywhere he was needed, and that in his absence usurpers would appear. Like so much else it evolved from contingent modifications of earlier expedients.

Diocletian provided the model when he adopted Maximian, first as Caesar, and then promoted him to Augustus. The use of the title Caesar to mean junior emperor and/or Augustus-in-waiting went back to the reign of Vespasian. It had been used by other emperors, along with adoption, to secure the succession. Diocletian's idea for extending this stability was that each Augustus would adopt a new Caesar, creating an imperial college of four, the tetrarchy. Each Augustus would eventually retire, to be replaced by his Caesar who would in turn adopt his own helper and successor. Yet sharing imperial rule was not in itself new. Marcus had ruled as co-Augustus with Lucius Verus in the middle of the second century, and Severus briefly ruled with both his sons whom he seems to have expected to succeed him as co-emperors. Diocletian's only real innovation, the idea of two parallel dynasties renewed by periodic adoptions, was also the only component of the new package that was not successful. After the civil wars of the early fourth century, Constantine ruled for a while as sole emperor. On his death all three of his sons succeeded, to begin their own struggles for power. After this the number of emperors varied according to the chance of civil war and political fortune. Constantius II was sole Augustus from 350 until 361, as were each of his two short-lived successors, Julian and Jovian. But on the latter's death in 364 the brothers Valens and Valentinian ruled together, and two more members of the family ruled as boy emperors before the dynasty was extinguished in the chaos that followed the battle of Adrianople in 378. Theodosius I ruled as sole emperor, but by his death in 395 both his sons had been made his colleagues. At no point did collegiate rule represent a division of the empire into two, three, or four separate states, and co-emperors were mostly related. Generally the system worked, if the aim was to reduce the incidence of civil wars and usurpations. The western frontiers seemed stronger for being ruled from Trier or Milan, and there was no repeat of the events of the 260s when troops, resources, and attention had been drawn off to the east. Ironically, the fall of the west was triggered by the defeat of the eastern army. Yet one effect of the multiplication of emperors was a potential lack of coherence in policy. That was exposed most dramatically in the years after Adrianople when each court seemed most interested in expelling the Gothic immigrant groups from their own sphere of influence.



Fig. 19. Porphyry statue of the Four Tetrarchs at the Basilica di San Marco, St Mark's Square, Venice, Italy

The fact that there were earlier precedents for many of the innovations of the fourth century did not mean the package was unchanged. How far Diocletian and Constantine felt themselves to be innovators is another question, but maybe not a very important one. Perhaps the real significance of the military crisis of the third century was that it intensified the process of experimentation: emperor after

emperor sought new solutions, liberated by necessity from considerations of tact and custom. Decius and mass persecution, Gallienus' military reforms, Aurelian and the cult of Sol Invictus, Diocletian and an edict on maximum prices were all initiatives taken in desperation, but they were not crazy ideas. Senatorial accounts of some of the soldier emperors are very vicious, marking the social distance that had emerged between court and Senate. Macrinus was presented as more or less a barbarian. Yet some were very effective.¹⁴ A few experiments were disasters: debasing the coinage to fund larger armies when tax revenues were depleted by usurpation was a short-term fix that triggered inflation and weakened the monetary system fatally. Diocletian had to devise a new currency system that was then modified by Constantine in order to repair things. That worked, but his edict on maximum prices was unenforceable. Yet other experiments, such as the development of a more mobile field army, were more successful. The net effect was to create an effective empire for the fourth century, and the basis of a smaller one that would survive for many centuries more.

The final component of the new empire was presentational. Ceremonial became more elaborate.¹⁵ Ruler and courtiers dressed in extraordinary costumes, as we can see from the mosaics at Ravenna and Istanbul. Contemporary accounts notice the sudden increase in court rituals. The Emperor Julian wrote a satire entitled the *Caesars* in which each of his predecessors is caricatured as they arrive for a Saturnalian banquet held on Olympus by Romulus. When Diocletian turns up he makes a grand entrance in fabulous costume, surrounded by a chorus of the other tetrarchs.¹⁶ The image of the emperor as fellow citizen, who wore simple togas woven by his wife and daughters, was banished forever.¹⁷ Extravagant triumphs were celebrated by (among others) Aurelian, Diocletian, Constantine, Constantius II, and Theodosius I.¹⁸ Anniversary celebrations were held for the tenth- and twentieth-year anniversaries of an emperor's reign. Thirty-year anniversaries, *tricennalia*, were celebrated in Rome by both Constantine and Theoderic the Ostrogoth. The arrival of an emperor in a city generated a major festival. Gigantic statues were built and vast intimidating palaces. Approaching the imperial presence inspired real awe. Religious ritual was harnessed to these ends, as emperors tried to set themselves back in the centre of the cosmos. Severus had organized Saecular Games in AD 204 but Philip organized another series in 248 to celebrate the thousand-year anniversary of the city. Decius attempted to organize a mass sacrifice, a *supplicatio*, to be carried out by all citizens of the empire. This may well have been the point at which the number of Christians in the empire first became apparent, as the first general persecution followed in AD 250 directed

against those who had failed to sacrifice. Sacrifice certificates, proving participation, have been found from Egypt. The idea of organizing empire-wide rituals was a new one, even if it was in some ways a logical consequence of Caracalla's expanding the citizen-body to incorporate most inhabitants of the empire. Aurelian found time in 274 after his victory over Palmyra to found a temple of the Undefeated Sun in Rome, with a new college of pontiffs dedicated to its worship. The sungod had been closely associated with the person of the emperor on coinage since the early third century. The conquest of Palmyra provided enough booty, and perhaps some imported statuary, to create the magnificent temple. Diocletian associated each Augustus and his Caesar with a divine patron, Jupiter in his case, Hercules in the case of Maximian, aiming to create Jovian and Herculean dynasties. Perhaps it was with similar ideas of creating religious unity that he also initiated the Great Persecution which earned him such condemnation from the Christian polemicists Lactantius and Eusebius.

Military success generated its own legitimacy. Once individual emperors survived longer than the average, then they seem automatically to have become less challengeable and so were able to achieve more. The tide was already turning in the 250s. Gallienus ruled 253–68, and despite the disasters of his reign, including the capture and execution of his father and co-emperor Valerian in 260, he was remembered for a series of successful campaigns against the Alamanni, and the first major steps towards the creation of a mobile field army. Aurelian, who was implicated in Gallienus' murder, ruled 270–5 and triumphed over the Gallic emperor Tetricus and Queen Zenobia of Palmyra, before being murdered himself. Diocletian and Constantine, just by surviving longer, restored more coherence to the imperial system and prestige to the position of emperor.

An Evolving Empire

All imperial systems evolve over time. It is no surprise that the Roman Empire of the fourth century AD was not identical to that of the first century. To many of its inhabitants it probably did seem a success story. Civil wars recurred but must often have seemed like rather violent reshuffles within the imperial college, as when the sons of Constantine jockeyed for control or when the most successful of them, Constantius II, faced a coup from the nephew he had raised to the rank of Caesar. Those conflicts were generally short-lived and seem not to have seriously disrupted the management of the empire at other levels.

The empire had evolved through a combination of long-term

changes, many unplanned, like the spread of Roman habits of thought and lifestyle, and some, like slow social mobility barely noticed by contemporaries; incremental modification (such as minor redeployments of troops or changes to the fiscal system); and some dramatic responses to crisis. It was now rather different in structure from what had been created by Augustus at the moment when serious expansion stopped and the transition from conquest state to tributary empire was first achieved. The Augustan empire had had concentric structure. Rome was at the centre, then Italy inhabited by a few million Roman citizens and exempt from much taxation, and beyond that the broad zone of taxpaying provinces administered by the propertied elites of cities new and old, enclosed by an emerging frontier zone where citizen armies stared outwards at barbarians and inwards at potential rebels. By the fourth century the difference between Italy and the inner provinces was gone, and virtually all the inhabitants of the empire were citizens. It has aptly been compared to a vast nation-state.

The cultural distance between the provinces had been reduced massively at the level of the elite who shared the essential components of a common lifestyle wherever they lived. Educational systems divided the provinces where the educated spoke Latin from those where Greek was dominant: crudely put the line bisected modern Libya and the Adriatic and then turned north-east to separate the Latin-speaking Danube provinces from the Greek world. Yet at the highest level the division was not absolute and anyone who sought a career in the bureaucracy or a place in the Senate could speak Latin. The common aristocratic lifestyle that had emerged in the second century persisted, more now in rural residences than in cities perhaps, but still attested by amazing mosaics, collections of statuary, and literatures that celebrated the symposium and knowledge of the classics. Spending on civic monuments had declined along with cities.¹⁹ Most of this is observable through archaeology and hardly figures in literary texts, yet the differences must have been evident to travellers like the soldier Ammianus who served on the Rhine and the Persian frontier and had visited Rome and Antioch, and to many others.

Below the level of the elite, material culture suggests greater regional differences. Only a part of these were the legacy of the huge diversity of the societies that had been incorporated into the empire by force half a millennium before. At the end of the last and beginning of the first centuries, there had been a phenomenal provincial demand for Roman-style products, from temples to tableware, and bronze statues to wine and olive oil. Italian and then other Mediterranean producers grew briefly rich supplying these goods to the new

provinces, especially those outside the Mediterranean world. It is possible to trace the subsequent spread of technologies including brick-making and the use of waterproof concrete, viticulture and arboriculture, stock-raising and fish-pickling, and the production of fine pottery. These were put at once to local uses, and as local production was established so regional styles began to diverge. If the lifestyles of the elite were converging across the empire, the opposite was true for many others, although the situation was complicated by imitation of the local wealthy by the upwardly mobile, and by empire-wide travel by merchants, pilgrims, and soldiers. The pattern of unified high culture and diverse local cultures is one reproduced in early empires around the globe. Members of the elite were in any case more mobile than their subordinates, and changes in the governmental structure of the empire only enhanced this.

Rome in the early empire has been characterized as ‘government without bureaucracy’: the imperial aristocracies of the senatorial and equestrian order provided a tiny number of governors and generals, overseeing a world of cities run by local elites. What held the system together was a shared sense of aristocratic culture. The new bureaucracy of the fourth century was much larger and recruited from those who were educated but generally not aristocratic. It had a complex internal hierarchy of ranks, was divided into departments, and the whole system was focused on the praetorian prefects and the courts in capitals that were located in the frontier zone. The aristocratic propertied classes that ruled cities in the peaceful interior maintained their social eminence but began to come under financial pressure and were now potentially alienated from the government of the empire. This was true even of Rome, which emperors visited rarely and never made their base. Rome remained a cultural centre, and the wealth of the senatorial aristocracy in the fourth century was fabulous, but its relationship with the new centre of power was precarious. During the late fourth century emperors in Milan communicated with the Senate via the prefect of the city, and the Senate sent ambassadors and petitions to the court just as great provincial cities had done in the early empire.

Some precious documents present us with an image of imperial style in this period. One is the *Notitia Dignitatum* of which a gloriously illustrated copy made in the sixteenth century survives. The original was composed at the end of the fourth century and parts revised in a complicated manner that is still obscure, through the early fifth century. Each page is devoted to a different office in the hierarchy—praetorian prefects, regional vicars, provincial governors of all kinds—and then the parallel military hierarchy including armies, forts, and weapons factories. The information contained is exactly what a

centralized empire would need, but the fact it was illustrated so expensively and yet would be out of date almost at once suggests it also offered a kind of panorama of power. Each entry is also preoccupied with those details that matter most to insiders: precise titles, the orders of precedence and seniority, the number of postal warrants assigned to each official. And the fact it includes western and eastern officials and units in a period in which the empire was effectively divided into two shows it depicts an order of dignities that was idealized and ideological as much as practical.

A second key document is the Theodosian Code, a compendious record of all imperial edicts issued since the start of the reign of Constantine, compiled between 435 and 438 and then distributed in both halves of the empire on the orders of the second emperor of this name.²⁰ The code illustrates both the strengths and limitations of imperial government. The capacity to plan and execute such a project in such a short time shows how the imperial bureaucracy could be put to work and produce results. Yet the fact that to compile this collection it was necessary to write to provincial governors all over the empire asking for copies of any edicts they had filed away shows an astonishing lack of record keeping. The desire to make a complete collection, to order it logically by sixteen themed books, and to remove contradictions and inconsistencies perfectly expresses both the aspiration to rational, universal rule and the gap between that ideal and reality. That it was carried out as late as the 430s shows that despite the disasters of the generation following Adrianople, the empire and imperial society was definitely one thing and not two in the minds of the emperor and his staff. Starting the record with the reign of Constantine is also a rare testimony to an ancient concept approaching our modern one of 'a later Roman empire'. Finally, Theodosius' great project was identified immediately with imperial monarchy. The clearest sign is not the elaborate ceremony with which the emperor presented a copy to an ambassador of the western Senate attending him in Constantinople; nor the adulatory acclamations by senators when they received the work, a record of which forms a preface to the work; but the fact that in the centuries to come whenever barbarian warlords across the former western empire tried to convert themselves into hereditary monarchs with courts and ceremonial of their own, one of the first things they did was to issue their own codes of law.

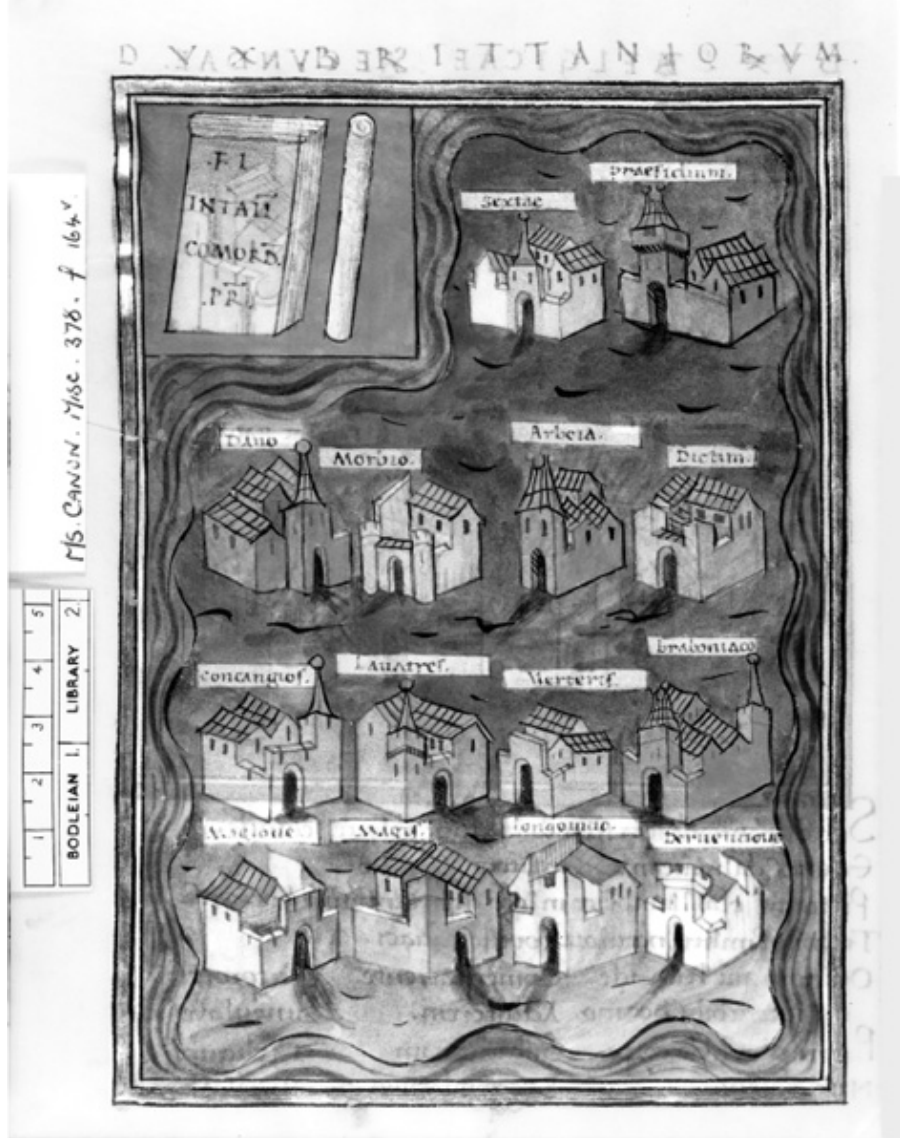


Fig. 20. An image from the late antique *Notitia Dignitatum*

Civilization without Empire? The Collapse of the West

Following the death of Valens at the battle of Adrianople in 378, the dependence of the emperors on their former enemies was greatly increased. For a generation, bribery, diplomacy, and threats of force were employed by both western and eastern emperors in a series of attempts to contain and deflect the Goths. But the weakness of the

empire was now obvious. The Goths eventually headed into Italy, and Rome was sacked in 410.²¹ The emperors retrenched to protect the interior provinces. Even before the Gothic sack, Britain had been abandoned.

Most of the other groups now entering the empire originated in that broad band of peoples who knew Rome well from long acquaintance.²² Some crossed the Rhine —Vandals, Sueves, and others—heading through Gaul to Spain. The Goths moved on to Aquitaine where they were settled as ‘guests’ in 418. From there they expanded their power into Spain, driving other groups ahead of them. The Vandals crossed into Africa in 429 and ten years later captured Carthage, the second greatest city of the Roman west. Meanwhile Franks, Burgundians, and Huns joined a confusing struggle for northern Gaul. As it happens a mass of literature written in late antique Gaul has survived, and through it we can trace the stages by which faith in the emperors was lost, the provinces slipped from Roman control, and local accommodations were made between the landowning classes and their new rulers. Following Aurelian’s suppression of the separatist Gallic emperors who had ruled the region from AD 260 to 275, the tetrarchs had paid more attention to this part of the empire. Trier, on the Moselle, became an imperial capital, and was endowed by Constantine with a great palace and basilica, imperial baths (which were never finished), and other monuments, many of them surviving to this day.²³ A series of panegyric speeches from this period illustrate the efforts of local aristocrats to draw imperial favour to their cities. From the court at Trier we have the poems of Ausonius, a teacher of grammar and rhetoric from Bordeaux who served both as a governor and as tutor to the boy emperor Gratian in the 370s before rising to the consulship. His poetry describes his relatives and colleagues in Bordeaux, the landscape of the Moselle Valley, but most of all the urbane life of the educated in the last generation of the western empire. During the early fifth century that world changed by stages.²⁴ It became less and less easy to tell barbarian warlords adopting Roman titles from Roman generals behaving like local dynasts as they struggled to protect their own regions.²⁵ Everywhere communities sought local protectors. Many aristocrats entered the Church. Some embraced ascetic disciplines, while others continued to exercise social authority in their cities as bishops. The letters of Sidonius Apollinaris offer a finely nuanced picture of the move from Ausonius’ world of educated aristocrats playing sophisticated literary games to a world of churchmen interceding for their people with warrior kings.²⁶

By the middle of the fifth century, the Roman Empire in the west was limited to Italy and parts of southern France. A Vandal fleet from

Africa sacked Rome again in 455.²⁷ The last western emperor was deposed by his barbarian ‘guests’ in 476, and his place taken by a Gothic king, one of the many barbarian leaders on whom western emperors had come to depend. Eastern emperors were powerless to intervene, and were compelled to use diplomacy in the west to free up resources for defence in the north and east. No single moment of crisis was recognized as the end of what we call the western empire. But it was obvious enough to Zosimus.

West of the Adriatic and north of the Balkans a new world of barbarian kingdoms had replaced the Roman provinces. Their societies were quite unlike those their Iron Age ancestors had lived in in central Europe.²⁸ During their time on the frontiers, new social structures had emerged. Most ‘barbarian’ rulers were Christian, and their idea of kingship was in many ways modelled on their image of the Roman emperor. Goths, Vandals, and Burgundians relied at first on tax systems descended from those established by Diocletian.²⁹ They ruled from Roman cities where they repaired monuments and they created courts at which they patronized Roman scholars and churchmen. Throughout the fifth and sixth centuries their administrations largely depended on an elite who in education and cultural outlook were as Roman as their ancestors had been. Some of these scholars put their scholarship to work reconstructing the ancient traditions of their new masters, combining tribal traditions with Greek mythology to do so.³⁰ The warbands gradually mutated into armies, the chieftains into landholders. Successive kings issued law codes, just as the Emperor Theodosius had, if on a rather smaller scale.³¹ Some of those law codes enshrined the principle of multi-ethnic states, each people using their own laws. Like Roman emperors the kings squabbled with bishops and they were drawn into disputes over heresy. Roman civilization continued in some ways very much as before, until the arrival of Franks and Lombards from the north in the sixth century and Arabs in the seventh. But the empire was gone.

Further Reading

Tim Barnes’s *New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982) is the basis for understanding the transformation of Roman government at the end of the third century, and is much more than a companion piece to his *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981). The institutions of the empire are described in detail in A. H. M. Jones’s *Later Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1964): how they worked in practice is the subject of Christopher Kelly’s *Ruling the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004). John Matthews’s *Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London, 1989) offers a vivid picture of the empire before

the disasters of Adrianople, one that encompasses politics and society. Fergus Millar's *A Greek Roman Empire* (Berkeley, 2006) offers a new view of the early fifth century. A particularly useful set of essays is included in Simon Swain and Mark Edwards's *Approaching Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2004).

Alongside these studies focused on politics and institutions, late antiquity has emerged as a vast field of cultural history. Peter Brown's *World of Late Antiquity* (London, 1971) was in some ways the manifesto for this approach. His own voluminous writings, and those of his students and associates, have explored with subtlety the rich material offered by Christian writings. His *Augustine of Hippo* (rev. edn. London, 2000) shows just how much can be mined from this seam. Perhaps the best conspectus of late antiquity is offered by *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Post-Classical World*, edited by Brown, Glen Bowersock, and Oleg Grabar (Cambridge, Mass., 1999).

XVI

A CHRISTIAN EMPIRE

You asked me to write an answer to the lying distortions spouted by those people who are strangers to the City of God. They are called pagans after the rustic crossroads and villages (*pagi*) they inhabit and foreigners (*gentiles*) because all they know about are earthly matters. They have no interest in things to come: as for the past they have either forgotten it or are simply ignorant. Nevertheless they still claim that the present day is unusually beset with disasters for this one reason alone, that men believe in Christ and worship God, while idols received less and less cult.

(Orosius, *History against the Pagans* Preface 9)

The Rise of Religions

Once upon a time, the Romans felt they enjoyed the special favour of their gods. Those gods were in a sense their fellow citizens. Their worship in the public rituals—the *sacra publica* —of Rome was the organizing centre of the religious lives and identities of the Romans. How this cohered with the public cults of the other communities of the empire was, as I have explained already, a little unclear. Yet the many polytheistic religious systems of the classical Mediterranean were not so different, and the worship of the emperors figured in them all, one way or another. Across the empire, the wealthy built temples, took on priesthoods, and celebrated festivals: all seemed to prosper.

Abandoning this pact with heaven was, in the eyes of many, an act of lunacy that had brought about the collapse of Rome's fortunes. Augustine, writing *The City of God* after the first sack of Rome in 410, felt he had to answer these charges. Roman success owed nothing to the cult of the gods, he argued, since there were disasters even in the period of pagan worship. Religious piety brought rewards in the next world, not this one. Earthly disasters like the sack of Rome were irrelevant. Can Augustine have really thought this? He wrote *The City of God* as Bishop of the African city of Hippo Regius, but in his earlier career he had been a professor at Carthage, had then been head-hunted by the senatorial prefect of Rome for a more prestigious position there, then finally went to the western imperial capital at

Milan. Only in Milan had God claimed him, and brought him back via communities of contemplative scholars to lead the Christians of this small town in North Africa, not so far from the even smaller town where he had been brought up. Even so he cannot have failed to be shocked by the events of the early fifth century. Africa was far from the collapsing northern frontier, and the world Augustine had been born into, where he had studied and taught, had been thoroughly Roman. The move to Rome had attracted him because of the reputed quiet of the students compared to those of Carthage. At Milan he must have become more aware of the deteriorating situation, but the fall of Rome shocked everyone. The Vandals were already in Spain as he wrote: before his death they would cross the Straits of Gibraltar and begin the short war that would result in their capture of Carthage. Among the refugees from Spain who fled to Africa was Orosius, who became a pupil of Augustine and in 417 wrote at his suggestion another response, a seven-volume *History against the Pagans*. The preface states that pagans in their ignorance had claimed that there were now more calamities and disasters because men believed in Christ and worshipped God and increasingly neglected the worship of idols. Orosius set out to demonstrate the many disasters of earlier days. The result is a horrible history of the world, six books relating events up to the birth of Christ, the last offering a fascinating narration of Roman history, in which acts of imperial tyranny and military disasters are ameliorated by the power of God as the number of Christians in the empire grows.

The gap between traditional world views and Christian history is obvious enough. But it is symptomatic of a much wider phenomenon. Christians did not only disagree with others about the reason for the current crisis; they also disagreed about the relationship of the cosmological with the political and social order of things. Traditionally ritual action had been mostly constrained within existing social entities, such as the family, the city, the army unit, or the empire itself. Christian communities were composed of believers who might have little in common except their belief, and who might be separated by that belief from other members of their families, cities, and so on. Nor were Christians alone in this. Manichaeans, Jews, and several other groups had also come to think of their religious identities as something separable from other aspects of society. Augustine expressed this more clearly than most in his distinction between the temporal Earthly City and the City of God, but the idea had become widespread. It is this idea from which has grown our notion of 'religions' as separate entities, rather than of religious action as just one dimension of broader social life. The reason the Christians were able to withstand the disaster of the sack of Rome was that this

idea of religion had become deeply entrenched. The great history of the Roman Empire, in other words, had been taken over by another even grander narrative, the rise of religions.

The development of religions, in the plural, as bounded entities with their own institutions and membership, as things that can be contrasted to citizenship, class, or kinship, is relatively new in world history. Humans have had ritual much longer: it probably originated with *homo sapiens sapiens* between 50,000 and 100,000 years ago, and is one of the few things that genuinely separates us from all other animal species, some of which use tools, have some kind of language, and live in complex societies. Humans alone bury their dead, make art and music and dance, and perform rituals.¹ Until recently all this ritual was closely woven into everyday life. It is more or less impossible to separate Athenian or Roman religious identity from their wider senses of belonging. It follows that conversion is more or less meaningless in antiquity, unless as one component of changing one's citizenship.² No Greek or Roman words correspond to our notion of religion. Indeed specialists in the history of religion see that concept as evolving only gradually. Our modern concept of a religion as an organized body with members, norms, specific beliefs and practices, and a sense of exclusive adherence—that one must choose which *one* religion to belong to—perhaps only became generalized in the nineteenth century.³

The first signs of the separating out of religion as a distinct sphere occur during classical antiquity. Euripides' *Bacchae*, written at the very end of the fifth century BC, dramatizes the disruptive power of a religious movement that challenged the religious authority of leading members of the city and might divide families and communities down the middle. This Dionysiac cult represents one of several origins of religious pluralism. Rome experienced its own panic about Bacchanales in 186 BC. Rumours circulated, as they later did in the case of Christianity, about strange nocturnal rituals. But it is clear that what really shocked was the lack of respect for social boundaries, and the implicit challenge to existing religious authority, which in most places was concentrated in the hands of the elite.

Groups whose members were united primarily by religion became more widespread in the Hellenistic and early Roman periods.⁴ Dionysus/Bacchus was an ancient god whose name appears in texts from the Greek Bronze Age, and who had a central role in Athenian public religion signified by the festival of the Greater Dionysia, the major occasion for dramatic performances. It was not the god himself, but the form of worship and association represented by Bacchism that shocked. Other groups began as the cults of migrant populations and then attracted worshippers from their host communities. The Egyptian

goddess Isis, in a Hellenized form, became popular around the Mediterranean in this way. So did the Baalim of various Syrian cities, the Great Mother of the Gods from Pessinus in Asia Minor, and the god of the Jews. Populations moved about within the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman empires for all sorts of reasons: traders, slaves, soldiers, colonists, and missionaries moved around the urban system, bringing their gods with them.⁵ Some, like Magna Mater, were given public cult in some cities. Others were always marginal. Religion also had roots in Greek society. Mystery cults proliferated, many imitating the original Mysteries of Demeter and the Maiden at Eleusis, once the main cult of an independent city but swallowed up into Athenian religion in the archaic age. Pilgrims came to be initiated here, and in Samothrace and in a series of other centres, and some more mobile groups, including worshippers of Cybele and Mithras, developed their own Mysteries.⁶ Philosophical sects provided yet another model of a group with a single name—Epicureans, Stoics, Cyrenaics—often a charismatic founder, and authoritative texts, a group one could join or leave as one chose. From the first century AD Jews too were identifying different traditions, and at least one, the Qumran community known from the Dead Sea Scrolls, looks very much like a religion. Sanctuaries attracted pilgrims from across the world.⁷ Yet often we see cults that had originated in specific places being transformed into a more mobile form. Examples of this move from ‘locative’ to ‘utopian’ forms include the creation of Hellenized versions of Egyptian deities like Isis and Serapis, the growth of rabbinical traditions within Judaism, and of course Christianity. Almost all these groups were periodically focuses of intra-communal tension: at various points the authorities in Rome turned their fire on Bacchanales, Isis worshippers, Jews, astrologers, and Christians. Other cities often did the same. Yet religious groups of this kind continued to thrive. Mithraism and Manichaeism both represent religions created from scratch, drawing on symbols, rituals, and divine names from older traditions but brought together into a completely new combination, well suited to the social environments within which they sought recruits. We can see some signs of competition for worshippers, or at least for the gifts they might bring. Perhaps the clearest indication is the way a successful feature of one cult would be taken up by another. The ancient Mysteries of Eleusis were copied at Samothrace, by the worshippers of Cybele, Mithras, and other groups; standard Greek anthropomorphic imagery was adopted by cult after cult; astrology was incorporated by almost every religious tradition from Judaism and Mithraism to the worship of Egyptian and German deities; and male gods were equated everywhere with Jupiter the Greatest and Best. Another sign of competition was the efforts clearly made to retain the attention of

worshippers. Mithraists were invited to proceed through a series of grades; initiates at Eleusis had to return for a second initiation in a subsequent year; the ritual of the Taurobolium, a bull sacrifice associated with Cybele, had to be repeated every twenty years; while priests at healing sanctuaries and oracles advertised their successes and encouraged return visits.

Perhaps claims to a monopoly on salvation emerged from this context. The idea that a person might focus in a personal way on one god within a polytheist pantheon was an old one, and one exploited by Romans from the Republican period on.⁸ Sulla cultivated the idea he was a special favourite of Venus, Augustus claimed the favour of Apollo, Vespasian was assisted in his coup by Isis, and so on. Many gods were hailed in dedicatory inscriptions as ‘The Greatest and Best’ or ‘The Most High’.⁹ Giving one deity a special place is sometimes called henotheism. Some Isaic revelatory texts claim Isis is the ‘true’ name of a goddess also worshipped under other names, including Cybele, Artemis, Venus, and Hecate.

Early Christianity emerged into this complex religious environment. The exclusive claim, despite its origins in Judaism, was maybe most important as a unique selling point relative to other emergent proto-religions. The Gospels represented the choice to follow Christ as something that might divide families in the most radical way. Luke tells the story of the man who says he will follow Christ once he has buried his father. ‘Let the dead bury their own dead,’ replies Christ.¹⁰ There are several stories of this kind. Even earlier Paul had declared that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female.¹¹ What we are observing in these texts is the assertion of a new social identity based solely on religious membership, and one that cuts across the most fundamental social boundaries of antiquity. Christians were not the only ones to assert that sort of identity. Augustine was raised a Christian, but for a while joined the Manichaeans, whose founder created a new religion by drawing on Christian, Zoroastrian, Jewish, and other traditions. Manichaean missionaries were sent to North Africa, India, and ultimately central Asia and China too. Then there are the rather mysterious Mandaean of Mesopotamia, whose rituals and texts have been formed in the course of a long dialogue with Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam. Inevitably traditional religious practice came to be reinterpreted as the practice of a rival—and false—religion, which was sometimes termed Hellenism and sometimes paganism.

The Rise of Christianity

Modern estimates of the growth of Christianity stress the very small scale of its beginnings. It is difficult to imagine what life was like for the first generation of Christians: they had no scriptures, most had been born Jews, and perhaps many still thought of themselves as Jews. They numbered in the low thousands and were widely scattered, mostly among the larger cities of the eastern Mediterranean world.¹² Paul's *Letters* and the account of his travels in *Acts* give some sense of how these groups kept in touch and maintained some sort of cohesion. But there are huge gaps in our knowledge. By late antiquity there were major Christian communities in North Africa and Egypt, but we know nothing of their origins. The emergence of a greater concern with orthodoxy and discipline in later centuries produced highly edited accounts of the early Church.

Christianity emerged from these shadows during the second century AD. Christian writers and Jewish leaders, for different motives and certainly not in collusion, created a sharper divide between Christianity and Judaism, one that would be entrenched in the fourth century with the aid of imperial muscle.¹³ House churches were drawn together in each city under the leadership of one bishop. The number of Christians grew exponentially. Many must have felt themselves surrounded by converts and part of a mushrooming movement. Yet absolute numbers remained small: non-Christian texts hardly remark on the existence of Christians before the year 200. From the later second century, we have the first evidence for Christian communities in North Africa and in Gaul. Most seem to have used Greek, suggesting their closest connections remained with the eastern Mediterranean. Something close to our notion of the New Testament had emerged by this period too, although the inclusion of some books, such as Revelation, remained controversial. Latin translations of Christian scripture began to circulate by the middle of the second century, along with apologetic works and the first attempts to police the boundaries of the Church. Heretics were those who held false beliefs, like the Marcionites who rejected the Jewish scriptures in their entirety. Schismatics had the right beliefs but rejected the authority of the proper authorities.

The rise of episcopal authority was intimately connected with the rise of orthodoxy. The life and work of Irenaeus of Lyon offers an early example. Eusebius, in his *History of the Church* written shortly after Constantine's conversion, states that he was a pupil of the martyred Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna, himself believed to be a disciple of the apostle John. But that kind of genealogy was a conventional way of establishing authority. At some point Irenaeus appears as a priest in the Greek-speaking Christian community of Lyon, around the time of a local persecution recorded by Eusebius and dated to the

reign of Marcus Aurelius. That community sent Irenaeus as an envoy to the Bishop of Rome prompted by their concerns about the news that Montanus, a priest in central Anatolia, claimed to have received a New Prophecy from God. Montanism was just the first heresy Irenaeus set out to refute. As Bishop of Lyon, he wrote copious works in Greek, among them a defence of the canonical status of the four Gospels, and one of the earliest heresiologies, or catalogues of heresies. The immediate inspiration for that work was the arrival in Lyon of a group of Greek merchants spreading the ideas of Valentinus, whose blend of Christian thought and mystical revelation produced an early form of what is now termed Gnosticism. But for Irenaeus the error could be traced all the way back to the magician Simon Magus, who appears in Acts, thus creating a genealogy of error that could be set against the genealogy of orthodox teaching. Hippolytus, Bishop of Rome, also opposed Valentinianism, using some of Irenaeus' writings to do so. Both the campaign against Montanism and that against the teachings of Valentinus illustrate the interconnectedness of early Christian communities across the Mediterranean. Within that network new ideas circulated rapidly, carried by both missionaries and texts. From late antiquity several large bodies of episcopal letters survive concerned above all to maintain a united front against schism and heresy. The organization of the Church was generated from below, its institutions and higher-level authorities a creation of those obsessed by unity. Bishops closed ranks around scripture, and opposed the threats to their authority posed by new revelations and charismatic prophets.¹⁴

Christian communities devoted enormous energy to this activity, but it was largely esoteric. Non-Christians probably knew relatively little about their actual beliefs or concerns, just as many were ignorant about the Jews in their midst. A small number of local persecutions are recorded. Most are known through the writings of Eusebius and his early fourth-century contemporaries, who were keen to gather accounts of the deeds and deaths of martyrs. Roman governors and emperors did not extend to Christians the protection they sometimes gave Jewish communities in similar circumstances. Letters between Pliny while governor of Bithynia-Pontus and Trajan indicate that some kind of ban existed—the origins are obscure—but emperors were not keen to enforce it. Persecution was probably less common than simple unpopularity. Until the early third century Christians were perhaps a rather introverted group, if a growing one. Few scholars believe more than 10 per cent of the empire's subjects were Christians in Constantine's day and the figures could easily be even smaller. Very few Christians of high social status are known before the third century AD.

The first general persecution was that organized by the Emperor

Decius in 250 AD, in the darkest days of the military crisis. Probably this was a response to the refusal of some Christian leaders and communities to participate in a great *supplicatio*, a collective ritual of sacrifice involving all Roman citizens.¹⁵ Since Caracalla's Edict of 211, the citizen body comprised most free subjects of the emperors. General persecution, in other words, was an accident. Caracalla had inadvertently created something completely lacking in early centuries, a form of religious authority that might be applied to the empire as a whole. Decius' attempt to employ it had exposed a group who practised exclusive cult of one god. Yet the anger that fuelled persecution perhaps drew on a sense that the military disasters and the great plague were a response to Christian abandonment of the gods. Galerius and Diocletian seem to have exploited the same sentiments when in 303 they organized their Great Persecution. It involved purges of the military, the confiscation and destruction of sacred texts, and attacks on churches and church property.

It was not the first edict of its kind. From the year before we have a letter addressed by Diocletian and his tetrarchic colleagues to the proconsul of Africa that roundly condemns another new religion, Manichaeism. The teachings of Mani are condemned as superstitions and errors, but also contrasted to the traditional and ancestral cults of the gods. The Manichaeans, like the Christians, were accused of trying to cast out the worship of the old gods. Worse still, they originated in the empire of the Persians, the enemies of Rome. Manichaean missionaries and sacred texts should be burned, and if any Roman of high status had converted then his property was forfeit, and he would be sent to the mines. The motivation for both persecutions seems clear. Christians and Manichaeans were enemies of the traditional gods; their origins and views were un-Roman; and they were unpopular, and the emperors wished to associate themselves with traditional values and cults. The implementation was another matter, and unfortunately our main sources are all Christian.

Church historians emphasized martyrdom, but this was probably rare in many parts of the empire. There is some question how far the persecution went into effect in the western provinces apart from Africa. The few who had died for their faith, and those who had been tortured rather than surrender sacred texts, were later idolized, to the irritation of those bishops who had neither died nor been tortured. A schism broke out in North Africa between those Christians who had handed over sacred books and those who were accused of effectively seeking out martyrdom. The death in 311 of Mensurius, Bishop of Carthage, associated with those who had not taken a stand, triggered a crisis in authority. That culminated in a division between the Donatists (named for their Bishop Donatus) and those who followed

Mensurius' line. Rival bishops and congregations appeared in many cities, and the division remained until the early fifth century. How far the failure of persecution mattered to the emperors is difficult to say. But Lactantius and Eusebius represented Diocletian and other persecuting emperors as monsters, and gleefully related their horrendous deaths.

A Christian Empire

Why was persecution abandoned? If it was popular, and created an enhanced sense of loyalty and solidarity within the empire, why stop? Christian apologists claimed that persecution accelerated conversion, because the example set by the martyrs impressed persecutors and (in the arena) audiences too. Yet comparative evidence does suggest the near eradication of Christianity was not an unrealistic aim.

Manichaeism was eventually persecuted out of existence in the west by the combined action of Christian Roman emperors and Zoroastrian Persian shahs. Buddhism was more or less extinguished in medieval India first by monarchs dominated by Brahmin elites, and then by Muslim conquerors. Only fragments of the Christian communities of Roman Syria, Africa, and Spain survived the rule of the Islamic caliphate, despite the fact that overt religious discrimination was in fact unusual in its territories. Perhaps Diocletian could not have completely wiped out a group growing so fast, but he might well have been able to marginalize it and reverse the progress it was making in higher-status social groups. Was persecution of Christians a failure in the Roman world because Christians were not sufficiently hated to make a suitable target? Were its enemies insufficiently organized or motivated? Or was persecution simply too expensive to promote in regions where there were no local zealots?

Whatever the reasons, Edicts of Toleration were issued by Galerius in 311, and by Constantine and Licinius at Milan in 313. Toleration, or at least a cessation of persecution, was not in itself so strange. After all, something similar had in effect happened between the reigns of Decius and Diocletian. Much more remarkable was that around 312, Constantine began to actively patronize the Christians. Almost immediately he began work on a great series of basilicas around the city of Rome: St John Lateran and St Peter's are among them. Most were complete by the mid-320s. They were, in effect, the first monumental places of Christian worship. Yet this was more revolutionary for Christians than for emperors. Other second- and third-century emperors had paid particular attention to specific deities, and some had built them vast temples in the capital. Hadrian built the great temple of Venus and Rome on a platform between the

forum Romanum and the Colosseum. Commodus had himself portrayed as Hercules and had the Neronian colossal statue of Sol remodelled as Hercules.¹⁶ Less successful was the attempt by Elagabalus to install the cult of the chief god of Syrian Emesa in Rome. But Aurelian created a vast temple of the Sun with the spoils of his war against the Palmyran secessionists, and Diocletian used Jupiter and Hercules to represent himself and Maximinus, and then the parallel adoptive dynasties they were to found. During his rise to power Constantine had been associated in much more conventional ways with Hercules, Apollo, and the Undefeated Sun. The city of Rome in Constantine's day had not been Christianized: rather the temples of yet another emperor's divine familiar had been added to its crowded sacred landscape.¹⁷ Christ was, however, a different kind of deity, not one recognizable to most Romans in the way that Hercules and Sol were. Nor were his worshippers influential figures whose support was worth seeking. While the tradition of imperial temple building offers one kind of context to understand Constantine's actions, and conversion offered Christians another context, neither seems to offer a complete explanation. The polarization of the source tradition does not help us reconstruct Constantine's designs, but sometimes it feels as if he was deliberately engaged in a complex balancing act.



Fig. 21. The basilica, formerly Emperor Constantine's throne room, now a Protestant church, Trier

Constantine did not require his courtiers to convert, yet by the end

of the fourth century the imperial court was predominantly Christian. And there were new, powerful, figures around the emperor. Constantine gave a range of legal privileges to Christian bishops, and some had extraordinary access to him: as always in the imperial court, access meant influence. Constantine also lavished on them the most precious resource an emperor possessed, his own time. Almost immediately he had declared his patronage of Christianity he was petitioned by members of both factions in the Donatist schism. Petitioning an emperor was a perfectly common procedure, and it is not surprising that Christians made use of it. Yet where many petitions received a short answer, or resulted in an instruction to a governor or city council, in this case the emperor did give it his genuinely personal attention. It can only be concluded that at a very early stage Constantine's advisers had impressed on him not just the importance of unity and orthodoxy, but also that neutrality was not an option for the emperor. Was Constantine an innocent drawn into problems the complexity of which he didn't understand? Or a zealot inspired to devote the juridical power of the emperor, as well as his wealth, to the benefit of the Church? Or was he in fact a very traditional Roman emperor, concerned to win the support of the most powerful gods for the Roman people?

Either way, his inability to orchestrate an immediate reconciliation between the African bishops did not deter him from further efforts to achieve unity. Most ambitious was the summoning of the Council of Nicaea in 324, for which bishops were given permission to use the imperial transport system. Eusebius provides a vivid account. Bishops were summoned from all over the empire and met in the imperial palace where the emperor addressed them in Latin, his words translated into Greek for the benefit of the majority. The immediate cause was another attempt at reconciliation, but this time not of a schism but of a heresy, Arianism. At the centre of this dispute was an argument over the nature of Christ, how his human and his divine natures were related, and how he stood in relation to God the Father. Constantine's concern seems to have been to achieve unity. His biographer Eusebius claimed that he achieved it: a common account of the nature of Christ was formulated, and a common date for Easter and the Nicæan Creed were agreed. Constantine's own proclamation also has much to say on the wickedness of the Jews. The bishops were also then entertained, and involved in the celebration of the twenty-year anniversary of his reign. Unity was not, of course, achieved. The Arian heresy remained a central source of division through the fourth century, when several of Constantine's successors embraced it. Christian missionaries to barbarian peoples also spread Arian ideas, most seriously to Gothic and Vandal groups, so that most of the new

kings of the west were divided from the eastern empire and from their own Christian subjects on doctrinal grounds. Yet the long-term prestige Constantine gained from setting himself at the heart of the triumphant Church was enormous. On his death in 337, the position of the Church was unassailable. During the last years of his reign some Christians within Persia were looking to him as a natural ally against the Sassanian shah.¹⁸ A Persian persecution of Christians followed. Perhaps all this followed naturally from the anti-Persian polemic in Diocletian's edict of 302 against Manichaeism. Constantine's long reign had effected a permanent transformation. All subsequent emperors except one (Julian who ruled between 361 and 363) were Christians. The stage might seem to be set for a powerful fusion of Christian Universalism with Roman Imperial ideology, but in fact, the Christian empire came into being only by gradual stages, and it was far from unified.

For a start, traditional religion did not vanish overnight. Even if Julian's attempted restoration was a failure, ancestral religion survived in many parts of the empire in one form or another. Publicly funded cults of the old gods continued in some cities until the end of the fourth century, and the writings of figures like Libanius of Antioch show that they still had their defenders among the elite.¹⁹ The senators of Rome were particularly tenacious supporters of the old gods, despite confrontations with the emperors over the matter as late as the 380s. The process of their conversion was a slow one that owed as much to social influence as imperial pressure.²⁰ Emperors did not force the pace of change. Attacks on pagan temples were rare before the end of the fourth century; classical myths continued to be read—and represented in art—well into the fifth century. The philosophical schools of Athens remained open until Justinian closed them in 529. Isolated communities worshipping the old gods apparently survived in Asia Minor until the late sixth century.²¹

Constantine himself had set some limits on the influence of the bishops in this respect. The Edict of Milan extended toleration to all religious practice. Jewish 'clergy' benefited from some of the same privileges as Christian clergy, although terrifying punishments were set for those Jews who tried to convert Christians, owned Christian slaves, or circumcised them. Ancient temples were preserved in Byzantium even after it had been re-founded as Constantinople in 324. Indeed, some new temples were added, and the foundation of the city had involved astrologers and augurs. Constantine had, however, banned blood sacrifice, along with the consultation of oracles and the setting up of statues to the old gods. These were the central rituals in traditional religion. It is not surprising that none of these bans was universally accepted and that controversy continued over ritual

practice until the end of the century. The fact the ban was issued, along with the legal restrictions imposed on Jews, shows Constantine had no great vision of a multi-faith imperial society, within which each religious community might pursue their own course under the benevolent and even-handed protection of a secular state. Pragmatism seems more likely from a soldier emperor who emerged from civil wars to reign for thirty years.



Fig. 22. The head of a gigantic statue of Emperor Constantine in the

Constantine's religious motivations will always be obscure, but the pattern he set for Christian emperors is clearer. Even through the hagiographic filter of Eusebius' *Life*, he emerges as an emperor whose success was in some respects highly traditional. He fought and survived civil wars and palace intrigues. He founded new cities, and patronized the Senate and people of Rome. Militarily and fiscally the empire was left in better shape at the end of his long reign than it was at his accession. The style of rule was literally spectacular, by which I mean that power was enhanced by everyday ceremonial and occasional festivities, performed on magnificent stages. The nature of his engagement with Christianity had to cohere with all this. It offered a new field of monumental building, and some new kinds of ceremonies. Ideologically it enabled him to draw implicit analogies between the divine ruler and his own rule. It brought him a new body of supporters. But if it was meant to offer new ideological solidarity, it failed. Christians, in the fourth century, all seem to have agreed on the importance of a common orthodoxy and common authority. Their ecumenical councils were quite unlike modern ecumenism that advocates tolerance of differences in belief and ritual and a loose federation of different churches. Yet fourth-century Christianity was riven by schism and heresy. As a result, the Christian empire would be more divided than what had preceded it. To a modern eye the amount of time Constantine and his successors devoted to questions of heresy and schism seems excessive. How, with the northern frontiers collapsing and relations with Persia so difficult, could they justify the energy and time they spent on the Church? Bishops of course had their own priorities, and their influence only grew over time. But emperors were neither fools nor dupes. Constantine had made a Faustian pact with Christ. The ideological support offered by Christianity and the rhetorical power of the bishops was potentially of enormous value to the embattled empire, but emperors could not afford to neglect its divisive potential.

Further Reading

Tim Barnes's *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981) is without doubt the best introduction to the complex history of his reign, even if it has not convinced all experts that Constantine was so wholly Christian right from the beginning.

The literature on the rise of Christianity is immense. William Harris's collection *The Spread of Christianity* (Leiden, 2005) gathers a fine selection of views without trying to impose one answer. Ramsay

MacMullen's *Christianizing the Roman Empire AD 100–400* (New Haven, 1984) is a clear account, full of insight. Rodney Stark's *Rise of Christianity* (Princeton, 1996) has been a good provocation for many historians. Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price helpfully set Christianity alongside other changes in *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge, 1998). Robin Lane Fox's *Pagans and Christians* (London, 1986) conjures up the atmosphere of this exciting period better than any other book on the subject.

The implications for the empire and imperial society of Constantine's decision have generated some of the most innovative scholarship. Peter Brown's *The Body and Society* (New York, 1988) tracks the emergence of new literatures and practices of asceticism; the accommodation of Christianity and imperial high culture is the subject of Averil Cameron's *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Berkeley, 1991); Dominic Janes's highly original *God and Gold in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 1998) explores how a religion born in poverty came to terms with fabulous riches; Garth Fowden's *Empire to Commonwealth* (Princeton, 1993) follows the tensions and interplay between religious and imperial universalisms through to the early Middle Ages. Alan Cameron's *The Last Pagans of Rome* (New York, 2011) is a vivid portrait of the culture, politics, and society of a generation.



Map 7. Justinian's reconquest (AD 565)

KEY DATES IN CHAPTER XVII

AD 527-65 Justinian

AD 533 reconquest of North Africa from Vandals, followed by successful campaigns in Italy to 540 and the invasion of Visigothic Spain in 551

AD 540 sack Antioch

577 Ring of Avar incursions into the Balkans

568 Avars invade Italy

610-641 Heraclius. Romans lose Jerusalem (614) and Egypt (616) to Persians and on the defensive until Heraclius' victory at Nineveh in 627

622 Muhammad's Flight to Medina. The first year of the Islamic calendar

626 Constantinople under siege by Avars and Persians

628 peace with Persia

636 Arab armies defeat Roman forces at Yarmuk. Jerusalem taken in 638, Egypt in 640, and Anatolia invaded in 647. The Persian Empire destroyed in 651

671 Constantinople survives Arab blockade

697 capture Carthage

711 Arab cross the Straits of Gibraltar, invading Visigothic Spain

XVII

THINGS FALL APART

Let the cities return to their former glory, and let nobody prefer the pleasures of the countryside to the monuments of the ancients. Why avoid in peacetime the very places we fought wars to protect? Who finds anything less welcome than the company of the elite? Who does not enjoy conversing with his equals, promenading in the forum, observing the practice of worthy professions, engaging in legal cases in the courts, or playing that game of draughts that Palamedes loved, or visiting the baths with one's fellows, or inviting one another to grand banquets? Yet those who choose to spend all their time in the country with their slaves miss out on all of this.

(Cassiodorus, *Variae* 8.31.8)

How Empires End

Empires do not all have the same fate. Modern studies of collapse and transformation have failed to establish a single theory of imperial decay, offering instead a range of alternative catastrophes.¹ Perhaps this should not surprise. Empires— even early ones—were complicated engines with many parts that might go wrong. The argument of this book has been that it is persistence and survival that needs to be explained, not decline and fall. Rome's genius—or good fortune—lay in the ability to recover from crisis after crisis. Until this one.

Some empires succumb to sudden and unexpected violence from without. The empire of the Inka crumbled before the invasion of Pizarro, and the Achaemenid Persian Empire was swept away by Alexander. The rapidity of their fall often seems to follow as much from the demonstration of the fragility of their rulers' claims to cosmological favour, as from any actual losses in manpower and resources that follow the first reverses. Emperors claim so much. When their weakness is exposed the disappointment is often fatal. Collapses of that sort illustrate how much early empires depended on ideology and symbolism to sustain them.

Other early empires simply fragmented, like the empire of Han

China and the Abbasid caliphate. Fragmentation is arguably a risk integral to the structure of tributary empires. Most early empires were, after all, put together when a conqueror accumulated a series of pre-existing kingdoms: Achaemenid Persia and Qin China offer paradigms for this kind of growth. Earlier identities were rarely eroded under the relatively light touch of pre-industrial hegemony and capstone monarchy. Egyptians remembered their pharaohs under Persian, Macedonian, and Roman occupations. Greek writers looked back before Rome and Macedon to the classical age of Athens and Sparta. Even when the issue was not one of ancient traditions, these empires were often composed of separable parts. Tributary empires often simplified their logistics by allowing each region to support its own occupying army and governors. This, too, made individual regions potentially self-sufficient. Alexander's empire collapsed because it depended on Macedonian armies supplied by local satrapal administration. Fragmentation usually began at the margins. Action at a distance is a problem for all emperors, and distance was exacerbated by primitive communications. A common response was to create powerful border viceroys, lords palatinate, margraves, and the like, with the authority and resources to respond independently to external threats. But when the centre did not hold these border generals often chose to go it alone. The outer satrapies of the Achaemenid and Seleucid empires were often in revolt. Fragmentation may be temporary, of course. Aurelian reunited the Roman Empire, and Antiochus III did the same for the Persian Empire. Chinese imperial history is often presented as an alternation of fragmentation and reintegration.

Yet other empires simply wither away. They lose control of their outer provinces to revolt or conquest, but successfully retrench to their original (or a new) core area. Often their rulers maintained the imperial styles and ceremonies of their grander pasts. Imperial Athens in the fourth century BC, late Hellenistic Syria and Egypt, the last century of Mughal rule in India all offer examples. After the Fourth Crusade resulted in the Frankish seizure of Byzantium in 1204 there remained tiny successor Greek empires in Epirus, Nicaea, and Trebizond. Historical sociologists have never found it easy to distinguish large states from small empires. Perhaps it is best to say that some empires have reverted to ordinary states with extraordinary memories.

During the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries AD, the Roman Empire underwent all three of these fates: invasion, fragmentation, and a dramatic downsizing. The empire was repeatedly invaded. I described in [Chapter 15](#) how Alamanni, Vandals, Huns, and others followed the Gothic groups, who entered the empire in AD 376. The loss of the

western provinces was not as rapid as the fall of the Inka or the Aztec. Yet within a hundred years of the battle of Adrianople, Rome's Mediterranean empire was no more. There were further invasions during the sixth and seventh centuries. From the north the Avars and Slavs invaded the Balkan provinces and the Lombards Italy. Periodic Persian raids into Syria culminated in 540 in the sack of Antioch. Finally, in the early seventh century, the Arab conquests swept away Byzantine Africa, Egypt, Sicily, and Syria and went on in the next century to destroy Visigothic Spain.

The empire fragmented, too, in the sense that the political unity of the west came apart in stages, leaving intact for a while Roman tax systems, Roman cities, and the Latin-speaking elites who ran both.² The fact that taxation was devolved via the praetorian prefectures to the groups of provinces known as dioceses certainly helped make fragmentation feasible. For some Romans in the west, perhaps only the identity of their rulers seemed to have changed.³ Theoderic the Ostrogoth held court in the imperial capital of Ravenna, celebrated games in the Roman Colosseum and Circus, and patronized the western Senate, even lending some support to efforts to restore the monuments of the city. The Roman senator Cassiodorus had a career at the Gothic court in Ravenna in the early sixth century first as quaestor, then as *magister officiorum*, and finally as praetorian prefect for Italy.⁴ These positions, part of the Ostrogothic inheritance from Rome, were among the most senior in the bureaucracy. Like senatorial courtiers of the fourth and fifth centuries, he also interrupted his career for a consulship in Rome. Cassiodorus produced elegant Latin literary works throughout his life, alongside the royal letters he was responsible for drafting. His panegyric of the barbarian king and his (lost) history of the Goths show how easy it was for educated Romans to accommodate themselves to new circumstances. At the end of his life, he founded a monastery and turned his attention to religious writing. Many of the earlier generation of kingdoms in the west—those of the Ostrogoths and Vandals and Burgundians for example—were in effect hybrid societies; Romans living by one set of laws and performing civil functions while the barbarian leaders lived by their different customs and provided the military. The exact means by which the barbarian 'guests' were supported is unclear. Did they own a share of the land? Or have a share of its profits? Perhaps different modes of accommodation were developed in different kingdoms.⁵ But it is clear that the kings stood at the head of these societies, tribal leaders and Roman magistrates combined, issuing law and distributing favours to all their subjects. The Visigothic kingdom in Spain preserved elements of this fusion until it was swept away by the Arab conquests in the early eighth century.

At Constantinople, too, some must have taken comfort in the fact that barbarian kings sometimes claimed to rule as subordinates of the emperor and put the eastern emperors' heads on their coinage. But in practice those emperors had no influence over their appointment, or how they ruled. Mostly they had enough to worry about defending their territory against raids from across the Danube or war with Persia. But fragmentation had been reversed before, and it is not surprising that the eastern emperors did not immediately give up on the west. Most dramatic of all interventions were those of Justinian in the middle of the sixth century. Justinian ruled 527–65 and his reign is exceptionally well documented, most of all by the historical works of Procopius, who produced not only accounts of the emperor's wars of reconquest and his building activities, but also of the intrigues at court.⁶ The great volume of legislation Justinian produced and had codified, and an account of the administration of the empire by one of his praetorian prefects, John the Lydian, together offer a vivid picture of the sixth-century empire.⁷ Justinian's generals succeeded in recapturing North Africa from the Vandals in 533, gaining control of Sicily and much of Italy from the Ostrogoths by 540, and finally creating a beachhead in Visigothic Spain in 551. But the wars in Italy, which were prolonged until 561, exhausted the empire and made impossible the kind of cohabitation between Romans and Goths created by kings like Theoderic and senators like Cassiodorus. The reconquest of Italy was short-lived: in 568 the peninsula was invaded once again, this time by the Lombards.

Finally the empire collapsed back on itself, and retrenched, not on Rome, of course, but on Byzantium.⁸ Retrenchment did not only mean shrinkage: the fundamental economic and administrative structures of the empire were in the process remodelled. Even at the beginning of the eighth century, when everything south of Anatolia was lost, and Arab invaders were crossing into Spain; when the Lombards had swept away most of Justinian's gains in Italy; and much of the Balkans was effectively outside the control of the emperors, Constantinople remained a spectacular city. But it was in some senses now the only real city in a miniature Christian empire stretched around the Aegean Sea. Its complex administrative and legal systems remained characteristically Roman long after Latin had disappeared from everyday usage, and the ceremonials and intrigues of the palace were as elaborate as ever.⁹ As the power of the Franks grew from the eighth century onwards, Byzantium was the only possible model for imitation, and the city still offered a fascinating spectacle to the descendants of western barbarians as late as the eleventh century, when crusading brought the societies into yet another relationship. The three heirs of Rome—as western Christendom, Islam, and

Byzantium have been aptly called¹⁰—were the products of fragmentation, invasion, and shrinkage. Each part had its own imperial destiny and dreams, but the story of Rome's empire ends here.



Fig. 23. A mosaic portraying the Emperor Justinian from San Vitale, Ravenna

Continuities in the Long Term

The detailed political history of the sixth and seventh centuries does not offer an explanation of the end of the Roman Empire. Those who wrote that history—whether chroniclers of disasters like Zosimus, or ambivalent recorders of imperial success like Procopius—had no real sense of the big picture. Christian historiography told its own stories, in some of which political changes hardly signified: the Church marched on as earthly kingdoms came and went. Otherwise political history took the familiar Roman form of an alternation between more and less successful emperors. Social, economic, and other trends were almost invisible from their perspective on the ground. As a result, the successes of Justinian in the sixth century, the disasters of the reigns of Maurice and Phokas that followed, and the triumphs of Heraclius against the Persians in the early seventh century do not explain the

structural transformation of the empire. I shall not try to summarize those narratives here.

During the course of this book, I have drawn attention to a number of contexts that made the success of the Roman Empire possible. The Mediterranean basin offered a corridor within which communication was relatively easy. The Sahara and the Atlantic together provided boundaries that, once reached, did not really need to be defended. The Iron Age civilizations of the Mediterranean world and its hinterlands produced sufficient demographic and agricultural surpluses to support the rise of cities and states, even given the technological limits of antiquity. Climatic conditions, broadly similar to those we experience today, had perhaps contributed to the general prosperity of the period, making it easier for peasant cultivators to produce the surpluses on which states and empires depended.

Little of this had changed by the seventh century AD. Plagues had occasionally ravaged the empire. Epidemics of different kinds had moved back and forward between the more densely populated (and so urbanized) portions of the Old World since at least the middle of the last millennium BC. But it is likely that this had been happening every so often since the first domestications of animals and the appearance of the first towns. The disease pools of Eurasia had been loosely connected by trade routes and urban systems from the Neolithic. Mediterranean plagues tended to come from the east, as Chinese ones did from the west.¹¹ Literary sources—our only evidence—record terrifying epidemics in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, in the middle of the third century AD, and again in the reign of Justinian. But it is very difficult on the basis of contemporary testimony alone to assess either the severity of these episodes, or their long-term impact on the economy or on population levels. The question of climatic change is equally difficult. Even minor changes in the mean temperature can have dramatic impacts on the fertility of marginal areas. Sea level rises are recorded in late antiquity in some areas while dendro-chronological (tree-ring) data has been taken to suggest a slight drop in fertility. But it is difficult to make close connections between changes at this scale and historical questions, such as the relative success of the empire in resisting incoming groups in different periods. Few historians today subscribe to either an epidemiological or a climatic explanation for the collapse of Roman power, and few believe in a dramatic collapse in the population of the empire. But research is moving fast in these areas, and the balance of probabilities may well change.

If the external environment of the Roman Empire were broadly unchanged, then the crucial variables must lie among the institutions and routines out of which Roman rule had first been constructed and

later sustained. I have emphasized the use made of the family, slavery, and the city; the community of interest engineered between local and imperial elites; and the power of ideological productions, including those associated with state cults, to capture the imagination of Rome's other subjects. None of these had remained fossilized over the seven centuries that separated Polybius from Zosimus. But many features of Roman society remained recognizable.

Continuities are most clear at the lowest level of organization, the family and slavery, linked as ever to the primitive conditions of economic production on which the empire rested. Cassiodorus' writings and the legislation of Justinian show us how vital some of these most basic building blocks of empire remained in the sixth century. Roman styles of family life were perhaps more widespread than ever before, disseminated by the spread of citizenship, the moderate extension of education in late antiquity, and the cultural convergence of the empire's elites. Notions of slavery and the family that would have been recognizable to Cicero remained enshrined at the heart of Roman and barbarian law codes alike. Probably the numerical balance between slaves and free had shifted very slightly. But where records are good, as in late antique Egypt, there is no sign of a dramatic change in social structure.¹² Transformation, rather than crisis, is the preferred term among scholars working on these subjects.

Fundamental change is much more evident at what we might term higher levels of organization, that is in relation to the city, local, and imperial elites and the government of the empire itself. The idea that collapse often occurs through the shedding of the highest levels of social complexity perhaps has some application here.¹³ At the highest level, the power and authority of the emperor, there was clearly enormous change as the empire fragmented, for all it was mystified by traditionalism and ritual.¹⁴ Roman scholars were, to some extent, able to reproduce their accustomed lifestyles in the chaos of Ostrogothic Italy or under the increasingly centralized power of Justinianic Constantinople. Rural lifestyles were least affected. But the picture looks different if we focus attention on that level of imperial society represented by cities, landowning elites, and the fiscal systems through which they had been linked ever since the Roman Empire was transformed from conquest state to tributary empire.

Cities and their Rulers

The early empire rested on a collusion of interests between the propertied classes of Rome and their counterparts in Italy and the provinces. Many of these elites were already installed within a world of city-states, whether of Greek, Punic, Etruscan, or other origin.

Others were drawn into that mode of aristocracy, and shaped in their image. Across the western and northern provinces, in interior Spain and North Africa and Anatolia, in Syria and eventually even in Egypt, cities on the classical model were established. Those cities provided the emperors with their most fundamental instrument of government. The local property classes that ruled them kept order and collected taxes, and in return the empire preserved and enhanced their power over other members of their societies.

Today, Roman cities evoke images of temples and basilicas, theatres and bathhouses, grand amphitheatres and enormous circuses, the representative highlights of a monumentality that, with some variations, came to characterize the early Roman Empire wherever it could be afforded.¹⁵ Monuments of this kind represented a commitment—financial and moral—on the part of the rich to a particular urban version of civilization. That civilization included a public style of politics and social life, and a festival culture that alluded to the past, celebrated the present, and was designed to ensure the future.¹⁶ The remains of those monuments are the physical traces of urban societies, the hard fossils from which the ephemeral material of human life and public rhetoric has since withered away.

Sixth-century rulers were as spellbound as we are by these traces of urban civilization. But by their day, they were no more than traces in most parts of the empire. Almost all the great monuments of provincial cities were built before the middle of the third century AD: even maintaining them was a concern for rulers of all kinds.¹⁷ The letter quoted at the head of this chapter was penned by Cassiodorus for the Gothic king Athalaric who was keen to encourage the propertied classes to return to their notional urban bases. Procopius wrote a long account of Justinian's building works, but when *On Buildings* is examined closely we see the emperor's attention was focused almost exclusively on churches and fortifications. When he did found the city of Justiniana Prima at his birthplace in Thrace, it covered around 7 hectares (around 17 acres): early imperial cities often extended well over 100 hectares (just under 250 acres). Already in Italy and much of the west, the propertied classes had moved out to their grand estates hundreds of years before. Urban contraction was most dramatic in the northern provinces, where occupied areas dropped to a third by around AD 300: by the end of the fourth century some were no more than refuges, fortified strongpoints built out of pillaged monuments in the middle of vast deserted towns, in which abandoned residential quarters were gradually crumbling where they had not already been turned into gardens and fields.

That vision looks catastrophic to us. But in most areas the process of change was probably a gradual one and the product of choice not

necessity. The wealthy had always had homes in both town and country, and over time they spent more time (and money) in the latter than in the former. Public building and the sponsoring of festivals in most cities dried up between AD 200 and 300. Meanwhile the villas of the fourth century display extravagant elaboration and ornamentation. Wherever the elites were absent from the cities, urban economies shrivelled up without the huge stimulus of their spending and that of their slaves, freedmen, and clients and without the support of their occasional benefactions.

Charting and explaining the collapse of classical urbanism has been a major research priority for archaeologists and for historians of late antiquity.¹⁸ One clear finding is that there were exceptions to this picture, but they are not where we might have expected them. Rome, for example, underwent dramatic population decline. Estimates for the age of Augustus are around one million, by the early fifth century it was about a third of that, and when Justinian's armies recaptured it from the Gothic kings in 536 it was around 80,000. The decline set in far too early to be explained by the Gothic wars or even the fall of the west. On the other hand a small number of cities show evidence for building of private housing and extensive trade well into the fifth and sometimes the sixth centuries. Marseilles and Carthage, Ephesus, Alexandria, and Caesarea are particularly well studied: all were, as it happens, port cities.¹⁹ This pattern is superimposed on some broad regional variation that can be (crudely) summarized as follows. Britain, Germany, and northern Gaul experienced earlier and more severe urban contraction than anywhere else, while Syria and western Asia Minor seem to have sustained urban styles of life longest, with clear continuity in Syria into the period of Islamic rule. Spanish cities were transformed during the fourth century, insofar as Christian building replacing older monuments is concerned, but there is little third-century construction of public monuments.²⁰ Many African cities do well into the fourth century and later, but others do not.²¹ Urbanism generally did not flourish in the Balkans, but in much of the interior cities had never been very large. Egypt had no catastrophic decline, but temple building declined from the third century, some time before churches begin to appear. Many classical cities had their afterlives, at least as places invested with memories. Many had been built on key sites in communication nodes; centuries of road building and port construction had only emphasized these advantages. Bishopricks were also based on the urban framework of the second century. Many towns survived to the Middle Ages only as wall circuits enclosing churches, and in a few cases the palaces of barbarian kings. Otherwise, the physical cities crumbled or were absorbed. Temples naturally found fewer sponsors after Constantine and some were

physically dismantled, but many became churches. Aqueducts functioned for surprisingly long periods after the end of their construction. Shops, stalls, and markets encroached on the great colonnades and public squares of Syrian cities during the sixth century.²²

It is still difficult to sum up this picture, let alone explain it in a way that is completely satisfying. But a few trends can be separated out. First, the rich stopped building public monuments and endowing money virtually everywhere before the end of the third century: where new building is attested in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries it generally comprises fortifications, churches, and private mansions. Second, even after elites had transferred their expenditure from public to private, they varied considerably from region to region in how far they chose to live in or near cities. Third, some impoverishment of part of the landowning classes is certain: at least some of this was due to increased burdens imposed by the state, at the same time as more members of local elites were able to escape financial obligations by joining the imperial bureaucracy or indeed the Church.²³ Fourth, civic institutions collapsed despite efforts made by various emperors to compel local elites to maintain them: their role was taken over by imperial counts and governors, bishops, and groups of first citizens.²⁴ Fifth, notwithstanding these trends, a small number of port cities seem to have thrived connecting densely farmed landscapes, like those of Egypt, Syria, and North Africa, to distant consumers. Sixth, responsibility for these changes cannot be laid at the door of environmental change or any other external factor: the only plausible culprits are the propertied classes and the empire, and they were certainly not working together.

Empire, Aristocracy, and the Crisis

Not all empires relied on an urban infrastructure. Romans did not exactly choose this course: the Mediterranean urban system long predated Rome's rise to power, and structured the social and political space they expanded into. Even so, cities and civic elites only really became central to the running of the empire in the late Republic, after the shortcomings of other mechanisms—such as unequal alliances, client kings, tax farming, informal hegemony—had been revealed. Pompey and Caesar had laid the groundwork, and Augustus had generalized the system.

But since then the empire had experienced a combination of incremental and catastrophic changes. Incremental changes included the gradual expansion of bureaucracy; the development of the court as

a governing institution in its own right; and the emergence within the propertied classes of a group of families of exceptional wealth. Catastrophic changes included the new monetary, fiscal, and governmental systems set up by Diocletian and Constantine. The bureaucracy run by the praetorian prefects and from the early fourth century by the *magister officiorum* (the same position that Cassiodorus had held at the court of Theodoric the Ostrogoth) was much larger than its early imperial counterpart, and it assumed fiscal, juridical, and organizational functions that had been performed before either by cities as institutions or by aristocrats in the imperial service. Unsurprisingly the emperors became less and less concerned to require members of the local elites—called *curiales* in the west and *bouleutai* in the east—to carry out their civic obligations if they would prefer to join the imperial service. Squeezed on the one hand by exemptions and on the other by wealth accumulation that reduced the number of families who could be asked to supply magistrates, some cities clearly ran into problems. Yet the fact that other cities seem to have survived and prospered shows this was less of a general threat and more of a possible hazard in the new order.

Attractive, then, as it might be to see Roman imperialism as a species of macro-parasitism,²⁵ growing up within classical urban civilization before killing off its host (and so itself), that story is too simple. Not only does it not explain all the variation between the fates of different cities: it makes no sense of the length of the process by which some (but not all) of the rich fell out of love with city life. An alternative narrative sees those propertied classes as the parasites, using the empire to accumulate wealth and power, and then refusing to pay their dues, with the result that the peasantries became alienated and the emperors ran out of cash to protect the ancient world from the barbarians.²⁶ Again this is too simplistic. If some elites were indeed efficient at accumulating wealth in a smaller and smaller number of hands, they were not completely immune from the tax system in the fourth century. It is also difficult to show the peasantries of the empire were generally more disaffected in late antiquity than at other times. Finally, careful reading of the letters of Sidonius, the history of Zosimus, the erudite researches of Cassiodorus, or the passionate apologetics of Augustine and Orosius makes it difficult to reduce the attitudes and motives of the educated and wealthy to such a crude calculation of financial interest.

So if cities were not essential to ancient empires, why should Rome not have reinvented itself as a non-urban empire? The bureaucracy created in the fourth century, combined with the army, could surely raise revenue and secure peace. In a sense, this is exactly what did happen from the seventh century on, in the remnant Byzantine lands

left around the Aegean. Constantinople was the only real city left, others were abandoned or became tiny market towns, and the empire was divided into districts called *themata* within which a single official exercised both military and civilian authority, raising locally the resources needed by the troops he commanded.²⁷ But this system was evidently created in the aftermath of collapse. Using the language of transformation to describe what happened to the Roman Empire between AD 300 and 700 is an evasion. Measured in terms of territory, population, influence, and military power there is no doubt at all about the fact of collapse. Ancients recognized this, and so should we.

Throughout this story of empire I have emphasized moments of survival. Episodes of expansion are not rare in world history, and nor are short-lived periods of hegemony. The exclusive club that Rome joined, however, is that small number of political entities that survived their own expansion, and were able to generate new institutions, ideologies, and habits. Successful empires are sustained by long-term relationships with other social entities with which they are in some senses symbiotic. The success of the Roman Empire rested on the synergies it engineered between imperialism and aristocracy; imperialism and slavery; imperialism and the family; imperialism and the city; and imperialism and civilization. Those relationships were not immutable: during the symbioses each set of partners modified the other. Yet they were not very unstable either. The Romans' own list of 'crises survived' might include the Gallic sack, the Conflict of the Orders, Hannibal and Cannae, the Social War, the civil wars, and a string of tyrannical emperors up until the anarchy of the third century. I have emphasized a slightly different set of key moments in the evolution of the empire: but in each case a new set of institutions emerged. From the third century AD on there are signs that each successive version of empire was in some respects less successful than its predecessors. During late antiquity the symbioses with the classical city and with the propertied classes grew weaker. That only mattered because what replaced them did not work so well.

Emperors seem to have realized this, since the pace of innovation did not let up. Attempts were made to remodel the aristocracies of the empire, making them more pliable and more useful. New titles were devised for senior courtiers, the Senate of Constantinople was treated with respect, and great ceremonies were orchestrated to draw in the masses. Positions were opened up in the imperial bureaucracy, and then actually sold to those who could afford them. Once in office, bureaucrats were allowed to charge bribes worth many times their notional salaries. Justinian tried to rally his subjects around a Christian faith; and worked as hard as Constantine had to unify that faith. He emphasized a single legal system, and with it traditional

moral and martial values. His reconquest of the west and his great campaigns of church building won support. But an ideology that required constant success was no support when times were hard. Military failures and payments to the barbarians undermined the reputations of some emperors. Christianity was a less effective imperial ideology than had been the traditional state cults, partly because of the chronic tendency to schism and heresy, partly because it conferred an independent authority on religious leaders, such as the bishops of Rome. During the sixth century one could be a Christian without being a subject of the emperor, and a Roman living under a barbarian king. Justinian was not welcomed with open arms throughout the west, and even at the end of what was by most standards a phenomenally successful reign, he was dogged by religious divisions.

The empire that emerged in the late seventh century was in some ways a hugely successful city-state. We could compare it to Rome in the early second century BC, on the eve of its expansion beyond Italy, when the scale of its territory was roughly similar. Geopolitically it was less defensible, with its long Balkan frontiers, and its exposure to the Arab invaders by land and sea. But the monuments were more impressive, and its rulers had amassed considerably more symbolic capital from their nine centuries of empire. Internal politics remained factionalized, both in the palace between rival eunuchs and in the city between circus factions. Yet it was stable in the sense that its institutions were now focused on survival rather than expansion. No one had planned contraction, but then no one had planned expansion either. Both the rise and collapse of Roman power had been generated by the internal logic of the institutions of the day.

The world around had changed, of course. Christianity and Islam now set the agenda in ways that the polytheisms of an earlier age had never done. A clear sign that the emperors were not themselves to blame for contraction, and that Roman institutions were not the central problem, is that no other empires were created in the gap left by Rome. During the second century BC a number of regional powers competed for hegemony, Carthage and Rome in the west, the Seleucids, Ptolemies, and Antigonids in the east, and beyond them the Parthians. The failure of one opened up opportunities for the others. When the Parthians' power shrank, the Sassanians grew to replace them. Similar dynamics can be observed earlier in the Near East and later in pre-Columbian Mesoamerica. But that did not happen in the early Middle Ages of the Old World. Theoderic played at being king of Rome, but could not convert his symbolic power into meaningful overlordship of the other western kingdoms. The Carolingian empire was a more fragile and tenuous entity than its Roman model. So, in a

different way, was the power of the caliphs. It is as if the age of empire was over. Unless the case for some general and long-lasting environmental disaster can be substantiated, the most likely factor making the world less receptive to imperial projects must be the emergence of the new universal religions of late antiquity.²⁸ Christianity and Islam did not destroy the Roman Empire, but the world they introduced was one less friendly to the great political empires of antiquity.

Further Reading

Michael Maas's *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian* (Cambridge, 2005) surpasses the limits of the genre, to present a new portrait of the age. Fundamental to the study of the period are the various works of Procopius of Caesarea. Averil Cameron's *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (London, 1985) is the best introduction. Some of her many important papers on the sixth and seventh centuries are gathered in *Continuity and Change in Sixth-Century Byzantium* (London, 1981) and *Changing Cultures in Early Byzantium* (Aldershot, 1996). For the west, Julia Smith's *Europe after Rome* (Oxford, 2005) presents an original and lucid new synthesis.

The transformation of the ancient urban system has been the focus of much work. Two very useful collections are John Rich's *City in Late Antiquity* (London, 1992) and Neil Christie and Simon Loseby's *Towns in Transition* (Aldershot, 1996). Wolf Liebeschuetz's *Decline and Fall of the Ancient City* (Oxford, 2001) is the best synthesis: it is worth reading it alongside Chris Wickham's *Framing the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2005). For the city of Rome see William Harris's collection *The Transformations of Urbs Roma in Late Antiquity* (Portsmouth, RI, 1999) and *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West* (Leiden, 2000) edited by Julia Smith.

XVIII

THE ROMAN PAST AND THE ROMAN FUTURE

I shall not perish utterly, for a great part of me will escape
Death. I will grow, swollen with the praise of future
generations, for as long as the priest leads the silent virgin
up to the Capitol.

(Horace, *Odes* 3.30.6–9)

The words are those of the poet Horace, composed in the reign of Augustus. As you read them, you surpass his wildest expectations. No pontiffs or vestal virgins are attested after the end of the fourth century AD. The Capitol has been ruined and rebuilt several times since Horace wrote. And yet we do still read Horace's *Odes*. Like the rest of Roman civilization, he has not perished utterly.

My final chapter is about survival and about how we know so much about the Roman Empire. Accident and chance both play a part in this story, and more recently our own research on which most of this book is based. But there is design as well, and not just Horace's. For the Romans have sent us many messages in bottles, consigned by generation after generation to remote posterity. We cannot take all the credit for the discovery of ancient Rome: the ancient Romans wanted to be found.

Accidents

Few empires lasted as long as that of Rome, or made such an impact on those they ruled. I have struggled throughout this book with metaphors, my own and those of others. The Roman Empire has been likened to an epidemic, a machine, a balloon, a vampire bat and a great resonating vibration, a tsunami and a tide, an organism known only through its fossil body, and a single human life. At times imperial society has seemed like a great dance too, one that drew in more and more dancers, and then was carried on by fewer and fewer until the music was quite different. My last metaphor is an ice age. Tides sweep over beaches and then retreat: fascinating flotsam and jetsam are left behind, but only after a great storm does the beach really look different. But if we consider what the Roman Empire did to tradition and identity, culture and religion, lifestyles and beliefs, we find much

more fundamental change. The empire grew like an ice cap, sending glaciers down in all directions. When those glaciers retreated, back to Byzantium rather than Rome, they left entirely new landscapes gouged out, and great moraines of boulders around which their new inhabitants had to accommodate themselves. Those peoples were no longer those that Rome had originally conquered: some were new arrivals, and almost all the rest had forgotten what it was like before the ice.

When we examine the monumental art, the inscriptions, and written texts that are our main sources for the identities assumed by Rome's provincial subjects, we find that in most parts of the former empire, all memory of earlier times had been lost. Western peoples, both those the Romans had conquered like the Gauls and Spaniards, and those who had conquered Rome like Vandals and Goths, had no reliable memories of their pasts before Rome. From early in the empire, many in the western provinces had come to think of themselves as descendants of Trojan refugees and Greek heroes.¹ Ancient place names and the ancestral gods had been forgotten, many of their languages had been lost forever, and the only history they knew was that of Rome. Half a millennium later, Cassiodorus and others helped the new barbarian arrivals create new genealogies, often along the same lines, although now biblical figures jostled with Brutus the Trojan and other legendary figures at the start of their genealogies.² Nor was this situation unique to the west. Many of the peoples who inhabited the vast arc of the Roman Near East seem to have preserved almost no earlier memories either.³ The Jews still had their scriptures, and the history contained in them. Traces of Babylonian and Phoenician and Egyptian historical traditions survived in works written in Greek in the Hellenistic and early Roman periods. Like the western traditions, they had been remodelled to suit Greek norms of memory and tradition.⁴ For the most part their identities too had been accommodated to their long subjection to Macedonian and Roman empires. Only the Greek historical tradition, which Roman scholars had long accepted, persisted. Yet even among the Greeks empire had reshaped collective identities and the memories they preserved.⁵ There was no alternative tradition, subversive or otherwise, apart from what the Christians were busy creating. It follows that almost everything that has survived, even by accident, preserves traces of a consciousness of empire.

Rome is better documented than most of the other early empires to which I have been comparing it. The explanation includes ecological and economic factors as well as historical and cultural ones. Empires of the tropics, like that of the Vijayanagara emperors of medieval India or the Mayan kingdoms of the Yucatan peninsula, were rapidly

swallowed up by vegetation. By contrast the Mediterranean heartland of the Roman Empire is— geophysically at least—a relatively stable environment, one in which stone buildings and tombs can stand for centuries if they are not disturbed by humans. Benign neglect has derived too from the poverty of many Mediterranean lands in the centuries after Rome. Renaissance Italy and early modern Spain notwithstanding, Rome has had few rivals in subsequent centuries. The leading edge of economic power moved in the Middle Ages, north to the lands of the Franks and east to Baghdad. The cities of Spain and Italy and southern France and Greece preserve elements of their Roman street plans partly because few of them were subject to the spectacular rebuilding projects lavished on north European towns in the late Middle Ages and after.

So Roman city walls and gateways became encrusted with houses that preserved them, sometimes completely concealing them for centuries. The amphitheatre of Roman Arles was given towers and made into a castle, the Porta Nigra of Trier became a church, the great palace Diocletian built for himself at Split became a warren of homes and shops. Sometimes only the shadow of a Roman monument survives in a maze of medieval streets. It is possible to walk around the curve of Pompey's great theatre in the *centro storico* of Rome even though none of the original construction survives above ground; the amphitheatre of Lucca has left an oval space in the city which was cleared in the 1830s to create a piazza; the great civic fora and temples of Seville and Lisbon were replaced first with magnificent mosques, and then after the *reconquista* with baroque cathedrals. Things were quite different in London and Paris, where great campaigns of building have obliterated major Roman cities. There are only a few sites like Silchester where a break in occupation has allowed something like the whole city plan to be revealed. The ancient cities of Africa and Syria, many of them, survived even better because they were buried in the sand. To be fair, many of the cities of the peripheral provinces were never as grand as those of the central provinces, and some were built more of wood and tile than of stone. All the same, it is still true that the best places to see Roman monuments today are in the poorer countries of southern Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East.



Fig. 24. The amphitheatre at Arles

Some Roman relics were enveloped not by medieval houses or the desert sands, but by the political designs of Rome's many would-be heirs. I described in [Chapter 2](#) how successive regimes have made use of Roman symbols of power to develop their own imperial imagery. European history has been characterized by successive 'renaissances' in which groups of scholars or artists self-consciously claimed a new status for their creativity with reference to the Roman past. Carolingian monks, the translators of the caliphate, the clerical scholars of the twelfth century, the artists of the Italian Quattrocento, the first humanists, the fathers of the Enlightenment, and many others have recuperated various Roman texts, buildings, and artefacts in this way. The relics of empire have been passed on through history like batons in a long relay race.

Finally there are the objects that lasted simply because of their durability. Early empires were above all great systems of accumulation. By force and the threat of force they drew matter and energy from all over their domains to be consumed and deposited in their capitals. Rome gathered treasure, marbles, and rare beasts from all over the world: the precious metals are long gone, the exotic animals were slaughtered in the arena, but the hard stones remain: brilliant white marble was from Proconnesus in north-west Turkey and Luni in Italy; dark yellow stone from the quarries of African Chemtou; porphyry and rare granites from the eastern deserts of Egypt, and green brescia from the Aegean.⁶ The Pantheon and the Baths of Caracalla are genuinely extraordinary even today: at the time

of their construction, before they were stripped of their precious facing stones, they would have put the Taj Mahal to shame. The Elder Pliny's *Natural History* includes long accounts of sculpture and bronze statuary. Despite his attempt to order this into a systematic history of art, he is constantly diverted into noting in which temple or portico or garden in Rome a masterpiece may now be seen. For conquest and purchase had assembled the treasures of antiquity—Greek, Egyptian, and other—in the capital.⁷ Much has gone, of course, and most bronzes were melted down long before the revival of interest in classical art during the Renaissance. The core of modern collections survived thanks to the energy of Renaissance collectors, who gathered a vast number of marbles which—by various routes—found their way into the royal and later national collections of Europe, there to be supplemented by aggressive acquisitions policies during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Archaeology has added just a few pieces to this body of work, but some are very precious. Our knowledge of ancient bronzes depends substantially on underwater finds, like the Riace Bronzes, two magnificent warriors made in classical Greece but found by a scuba diver off the coast of Italy in 1972. Current excavations at the cities of Aphrodisias and Sagalassos in Turkey have produced wonderful examples of marble sculpture from the imperial age.

Just a few great buildings were also durable enough to survive as more than traces in the street plan of Italian towns. Rome did not acquire its empire as some modern powers did through major technological advantages over its competitors. But by creating a vast space within which architects and engineers could move about and exchange ideas, and by concentrating wealth in such a way that grand projects could be funded, Rome presided over significant advances in construction techniques. This is evident from technical writing, especially Vitruvius' book *On Architecture*, and also from the study of standing remains.⁸ Greek stylistic models remained phenomenally important. But the invention at the end of the last millennium BC of concrete and the increased use and production of bricks and of tiles, along with ever more sophisticated techniques of surveying and design, all combined to make possible buildings on a scale never before seen. Vaults and domes made possible enormous enclosed spaces for basilicas, temples, imperial baths, and palaces. Even today the Pantheon and Hagia Sophia take our breath away. Aqueducts too consumed vast energy to build and required amazing engineering skills. A few still functioned into the Middle Ages, and others survived as bridges or simply because they were too well built to crumble, and too difficult or remote to dismantle.

Buildings like the Colosseum and the Pont du Gard seem at first

sight bound to fascinate.⁹ In fact, not all ages have been so entranced by antiquity. The sense that Roman buildings should be preserved whenever possible is relatively recent.¹⁰ Many are now known only through sketches and descriptions made by earlier travellers, architects, and Grand Tourists. Up until the nineteenth century, when campaigners like Prosper Mérimée in France first began to demand the preservation of ancient monuments as national treasures, it was not unusual for Roman arches or temples to be demolished to make way for projects of modernization. During the twentieth century the struggle moved to trying to secure legal protection for archaeological material that was not visible on the surface. That battle has been largely won in Europe. But there are occasional scandals, and the cost of conserving sites like Herculaneum and Pompeii still gives major concern.

Monuments

Today we use the term ‘monument’ almost interchangeably with ‘remains’. The Royal Commissions for Historical Monuments have responsibility, in the UK, for any site of human activity that has survived from the past. But the Latin term *monumentum* had a much more specific meaning. It was a thing deliberately created to commemorate a particular person or event in the past, and it was intended to project that memory into the future.

When a society makes monuments it reveals a lot about collective attitudes to time and the community. First it affirms the importance of history. Second it asserts—however nervously—confidence in posterity, that there will be a future audience or readership. Finally it imagines a community stretched out in time, those to whom this event or this person mattered, and those to whom it will still matter, both groups connected to the original event. Community, it says, is about continuity. A Roman monument captures, in a moment, that sense of the Roman People, fellow travellers on a common journey from their mythic past to their future destiny. Horace was not talking directly to us, in other words, since we are not part of that community. But we can listen in on the messages Romans sent to their imagined descendants.

Not all societies are so concerned with posterity. One reason we know Rome so well is that monumentality came for a while to be almost a cultural obsession. But things were not always that way. Before the middle of the fourth century BC, Rome was a great power in Italy. Yet very little in the way of monumental architecture was created. Temples are often monuments, of course, but they were also

homes for the gods, and their construction seems to have been part of a dialogue in the present between the city's divine and human members. The mid-Republican city seemed unimpressive to many visitors. Writing too had been used for mundane purposes for centuries, but it was hardly ever given a monumental form, whether in great public inscriptions designed to last or in literary works of any kind. Romans were not unusual in this respect by the standards of antiquity. But the decisions not to build great monuments, set up inscriptions, and write great books were choices consciously made: Romans were well aware of the monumental architecture of nearby Greek cities, and perhaps of Greek literature and history as well, and they could certainly have afforded to mimic either. Instead booty was more often spent on elaborate festivals that spoke to the present not the future, and although there must have been many traditions about the past there seems to have been no real concern to develop a common, collective, history of Rome.¹¹

A new concern with posterity appears at the turn of the fourth and third centuries BC. Appius Claudius Caecus, who was censor in 312 BC, commissioned an aqueduct and a great southern road, known after him as the Aqua Appia and the Via Appia respectively. The inscribed *elogia* of the Scipiones in their elaborate tomb complex constructed at the start of the third century BC explicitly addresses future readers. Who were these imagined readers? The location suggests family members, but when the inscriptions speak of individual Scipiones holding office 'among you' it is difficult not to conjure up the image of the Roman People. During the early second century BC more and more grandiose building projects began to incorporate the names of those who had commissioned them. Cato named the great covered hall he built beside the forum in his censorship the Basilica Porcia, an allusion to the royal (*basilike*) stoa given to Athens by Attalus, King of Pergamum, and to the gens Porcia, the clan to which Cato belonged. The first aqueduct to approach Rome on a series of great arches was named the Aqua Marcia after the urban praetor Quintus Marcius Rex who built it in 144 BC. Lucius Mummius had his name placed on triumphal monuments in the many communities on which he bestowed a share of the booty plundered from the sack of Corinth. From this point on the association of public buildings with individuals became absolutely regular. The great generals of the late Republic developed the idiom further. From the middle of the last century BC, a whole new series of monumental types appeared. Theatres, amphitheatres, and circuses are the best known. More than 1,000 were constructed between around 50 BC and AD 250.¹² To this can be added the Saepta Julia, imperial *thermae*, public gardens, libraries, porticoes filled with captured art, and so on. Not all senators were

fortunate enough to win booty with which to build victory temples, and only a few held offices like the censorship that allowed them to build with public funds. Besides, it became increasingly difficult to compete over the last century BC, at least as far as public buildings were concerned, once Pompey had set new standards with his great theatre. Tomb building offered a cheaper mode of monumentality. The tombs of the late Republic grew ever more elaborate and varied, including great towers along the Appian Way, and the pyramid built by Cestius now straddling the Aurelian Walls.

Eventually the emperors drove their competitors out of the city. But the effect was just to move monumental building to the towns of Italy and the provinces.¹³ The origins of this movement lay in a growing interest in monumentality that coincides, at least chronologically, with the origins of Roman hegemony and continued up until the crisis of empire. But when we visit Roman ruins today, we are mostly looking at monuments created in a long second century. Over most of the empire this building boom gathered pace over the first century AD, reached a peak around the year 200, and collapsed in the generation that followed.

Plot that pattern on a graph, and it pretty much coincides with the curve made by the rise and fall of Latin epigraphy.¹⁴ Most inscriptions were gravestones. That habit of commemoration seems to have spread from the senatorial aristocracy to other sectors of society, especially lesser aristocrats and former slaves. The freeborn masses were largely excluded, the peasantries of the empire are more or less invisible. Hundreds of thousands of these inscriptions survive from the Roman period, even though we probably have less than 5 per cent of those originally set up. The greatest numbers are found in the city of Rome and surrounding areas, but the habit also spread through the cities of Italy and the provinces, and was even taken up by soldiers on the frontier and traders far from home. These too are monuments, deliberate attempts to record human lives for posterity. And they are now a precious source of information on Roman history too, since many record the achievements and ranks of the deceased along with his or her closest relationships, with parents and children, masters and slaves, fellow soldiers and friends. They speak to us of an age when Roman society was at its most energetic, when levels of social mobility were greatest and the urban network of the empire reached its peak. Naturally it is the success stories that are most often commemorated—the slaves given their freedom, the soldiers who won citizenship after long service, the town councillors who collected the set of municipal priesthoods and offices. Their individual pride and anxiety plays against a confidence that there will be future readers; that the world in which they had succeeded would continue in

roughly the same form as the present.

One final kind of monument can be set alongside tombs and aqueducts, amphitheatres and gravestones, and that is literary texts. Not long after the first monumental tombs appeared, the same Roman aristocracy that built them set out to create a literature in Latin.¹⁵ Like the sarcophagi of the Scipiones, the first works created had clear Greek models. Like them they were immediately put to new purposes in Rome's very un-Greek social order. Horace's poem, with which I started, begins by borrowing from the Greek poet Pindar the conceit that a poem is a more effective monument than a physical statue. In practice we do not need to separate monuments and texts too sharply, since Roman monuments were from the start covered in writing. The earliest of the sarcophagi in the Tomb of the Scipiones were inscribed with a new verse form developed from Greek models.¹⁶ When Cato created his literary *monumenta* he was also fixing his name—quite literally—on the vast basilica that flanked the forum. Fulvius Nobilior patronized the epic poet Ennius, as well as building his temple of Hercules of the Muses. These associations only intensified in the early empire, by which point some of the poets and historians are themselves senators, or even emperors.

An empire where the elite write poetry is a very unusual thing. All early empires made use of writing, but mostly just for administrative purposes. Many empires contained within them literary groups, monks and court poets, priests and scientists. But few of these were close to the levers of power. Perhaps only the scholar bureaucrats of medieval China come close to the erudite senators and equestrians of imperial Rome, although in Rome this sort of activity was one cultural option among many open to the elite.¹⁷ Roman writers sometimes cast Athens as the civilizing counterpart to martial Rome. Yet Athenian festivals in the Roman period were focused on commemorating the battles of the Persian wars,¹⁸ and Aelius Aristides' speech in honour of Athens flattered it with its imperial past. The Roman Empire, on the other hand, created conditions in which education and literary culture of all kinds flourished. Poets and orators were fêted at court, and the emperors endowed positions for teachers of philosophy and rhetoric in many provincial cities. Great libraries were built by emperors in the capital, and by senators and town councillors in other cities. Probably more literary texts were created in the early empire than at any other point in classical antiquity. Most were in Greek, and they covered a huge range of subject matter from medical texts and poems about geometry to erotic epigrams and civic histories. Once again, only a fraction has survived, but through these monuments too we can listen in to the Romans talking to their future selves.

The Futures of Rome

What did the Romans want to tell posterity through their monuments? Many kinds of message can be put in a bottle. Most obvious is the author's desire to preserve his name, not to perish utterly. Imperial monuments were associated with the names of dynasties and individual emperors and their relatives. So the Porticoes of Octavia and Livia, the Forum of Trajan, the Baths of Caracalla made permanent marks on the cityscape of the city of Rome. The great marble plan of the city created in the Severan period is written all over with the names of generations of the Roman powerful. Greek and Latin inscriptions on the wall of gymnasia, theatres, libraries, and other civic buildings commemorated their founders. Even temples, where the names of the gods were most prominent, bore records of those who had paid for their building and successive restorations. Poets often began their works with letters addressed to their patrons. Tombstones listed ranks achieved, priesthoods and magistracies held, the profession, tribe, and age of the deceased, and the names of those left behind who had seen to the burial. All this is completely comprehensible to us now.

All monuments present an ambiguous attitude to the future. The act of creating a monument is an act of faith that there will be future readers, yet the need for one betrays a fear that all will be forgotten. That fear seems reasonable even when we think of the empire at its most secure. What of the period that followed? No agreement yet exists on the reasons for the end of monument building. Did the powerful lose faith in the future, or simply run out of the funds needed to communicate with it? Many were certainly impoverished as the imperial economy contracted and as the weight of government pressed harder on those who were not well connected. If the building industry collapsed perhaps this had knock-on effects for the production even of modest monuments. Yet the rich villas of the fourth century and growing expenditure on churches suggest no simple economic explanation will do. Inscriptions continued to be produced, if fewer and now for the rich alone. Perhaps we should imagine a loss of faith in the existence of a future audience, specifically that audience of fellow citizens that in the cities of the early empire had provided spectators for shows and viewers for urban monuments. Perhaps the wealthy had reimagined posterity not as the continued existence of the civic community, but as the persistence of a community of readers like themselves. Was that who Sidonius was writing for in the fifth century in his villa in the Auvergne?

New attitudes to antiquity emerged in the literature of the fourth

century AD, but no new consensus, either about history or the future.¹⁹ Classicizing historians presented themselves as traditionalists, but of course they were not. Zosimus gives the game away when he alludes to Polybius' account of Rome's rise and immediately asks who could imagine it was not due to divine favour. The answer, of course, is Polybius, who had offered an explanation based on the comparative advantages of political institutions and the attitudes they inculcated. But the argument had evidently become one about religion. Yet even the Christians did not agree about the past. More than a century before Constantine, Melito, the Bishop of Sardis, had suggested that the birth of Christ at the origin of the Roman Empire showed the Roman world was a providential creation. Orosius tentatively suggested something similar. But this seems to us to deviate from his teacher Augustine's position that the convulsions of the Earthly City had little relevance for citizens of the Heavenly One. Not all Christian futures had Rome in them, nor did all Christian pasts. Gregory of Tours's ten-book *History of the Franks*, composed in the later sixth century, began with the creation of the world and went on to tell the story of Christian Frankish rulers. The western empire fell somewhere in the middle of book 2, but it was not important enough to merit a mention in Gregory's account. For Christians this flexibility was an advantage. Nothing could catch them out, not the fall of the western empire, the thousand-year succession of Byzantium, or the terrible events of the Arab conquests.

What about the posterity of Rome today? Looking back down the telescope we see the worst is now past. Most classical literature ever written was lost between the fifth and eighth centuries AD.²⁰ When cities contracted the libraries—public and private—were no longer maintained, and books burnt, rotted, or crumbled away. Many had probably never existed in more than a handful of copies anyway, given the cost of producing multiple versions in an age before print technology. The shift from papyrus scroll to a codex format, essentially that of the modern book, also acted like a filter. What was not transferred onto the new format was lost. For nearly two hundred years in the west almost no copies of any non-Christian text were made. But what survived to the Carolingian Renaissance had a good chance of being gathered by humanists and preserved until the invention of printing. Almost all classical texts are now available electronically, in the original and in many translations. For the moment those monuments seem safe.

We can be similarly optimistic about the archaeological heritage, at least its most prominent components. Conservation is firmly established in law and it is rare now for Roman monuments to be threatened with demolition. Popular interest in the past has saved it,

making it an asset for those poorer countries that attract tourists and a symbol of national pride, too. Local activists defended Roman and other antiquities everywhere. Nor is it a dead heritage. I have tried in this book to indicate the many areas in which research is transforming our understanding of the Roman Empire. The philologists who established the science of classical antiquity in the nineteenth century have now been joined by archaeologists, art historians, and social scientists of every kind. New answers are being offered to old questions, and new questions are being asked and answered about every aspect of Roman antiquity. Neither the general public nor school and university students have lost that sense of excitement in piecing together a great movement through history that has left so many traces in the world we inhabit today. We are not the posterity that Romans of any age imagined—how could we be?—but in our hands the future of the Roman Empire is an exciting one.

Further Reading

No single book deals with all the issues rounded up in this chapter but there are several inspiring texts that touch on one aspect or another. The recovery of the past, including that of classical antiquity, is the subject of Alain Schnapp's *Discovery of the Past* (New York, 1997) and of David Lowenthal's *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge, 1985). Edward Thomas's *Monumentality and the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 2007) is a vivid and learned account of the most tangible of Roman remains. How the Romans saw ancient art is the subject of Jas Elsner's *Roman Eyes* (Princeton, 2007). Key works on the later reception of Rome are listed under the Further Reading for [Chapter 2](#).

A group of books have considered social memory: Alain Gowing's *Empire and Memory* (Cambridge, 2005), Susan Alcock's *Archaeologies of the Greek Past* (Cambridge, 2002), and Harriet Flower's *Art of Forgetting* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1992) provide contrasting models, all of them interesting. James Fenton and Chris Wickham's *Social Memory* (Oxford, 1992) also has a good deal to offer, even if it only concerns antiquity in passing. But the big book on Roman posterity lies in the future ...

Notes

CHAPTER 1

1. Velleius Paterculus, *Roman History* 2.1.

CHAPTER 2

1. Philip Hardie, *Virgil's Aeneid: Cosmos and Imperium* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).
2. Livy, *From the Foundation of the City* 4.20.
3. Denis Feeney, *Caesar's Calendar: Ancient Time and the Beginnings of History*, Sather Classical Lectures (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007).
4. Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, Jerome Lectures (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988).
5. Livy, *From the Foundation of the City* Preface.
6. Emma Dench, *Romulus' Asylum: Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); T. Peter Wiseman, *Remus: A Roman Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
7. Andrew Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome: Local Tradition and Imperial Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Greg Woolf, *Tales of the Barbarians: Ethnography and Empire in the Roman West* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2011).
8. Carol Dougherty, *The Poetics of Colonization: From City to Text in Archaic Greece* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
9. Erich Gruen, *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome* (London: Duckworth, 1992); Thomas Habinek, *The World of Roman Song from Ritualised Speech to Social Order* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).
10. William Vernon Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327–70 B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).
11. P. A. Brunt, 'Laus Imperii', in Peter Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (eds.), *Imperialism in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978; repr. in P. A. Brunt, *Roman Imperial Themes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 288–323).

12. Mary Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007).
13. Jean-Louis Ferrary, *Philhellénisme et impérialisme: Aspects idéologiques de la conquête romaine du monde hellénistique, de la Seconde Guerre de Macédoine à la Guerre contre Mithridate*, Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1988); John S. Richardson, *The Language of Empire: Rome and the Idea of Empire from the Third Century BC to the Second Century AD* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
14. Catharine Edwards (ed.), *Roman Presences: Receptions of Rome in European Culture, 1789 – 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
15. Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arab Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early Abbasid Society (2nd–4th/8th–10th Centuries)* (New York: Routledge, 1998).
16. Alexander Scobie, *Hitler's State Architecture: The Impact of Classical Antiquity*, Monographs on the Fine Arts (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990); Luisa Quartermaine, ' "Slouching towards Rome": Mussolini's Imperial Vision', in Tim Cornell and Kathryn Lomas (eds.), *Urban Society in Roman Italy* (London: University College London Press, 1995).
17. Matthew P. Canepa, *The Two Eyes of the Earth: Art and Ritual of Kingship between Rome and Sasanian Iran*, ed. Peter Brown, vol. xlv, *The Transformation of the Classical Heritage* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009).
18. J. H. Kautsky, *The Politics of Aristocratic Empires* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1982); Shmuel Eisenstadt, *The Political Systems of Empires* (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963); Susan E. Alcock et al. (eds.), *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Ian Morris and Walter Scheidel (eds.), *The Dynamics of Early Empires: State Power from Assyria to Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Phiroze Vasunia, 'The Comparative Study of Empires', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 101 (2011); Peter Fibiger Bang and Christopher A. Bayly (eds.), *Tributary Empires in Global History*, Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies Series (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); C. A. Bayly and P. F. Bang (eds.), *Tributary Empires in History: Comparative Perspectives from Antiquity to the Late Medieval*, special issue of *Medieval History Journal*, 6 (2003).

19. V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism: A Popular Outline* (Moscow: Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR, 1934).
20. Nicole Brisch (ed.) *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and beyond*, Oriental Institute Seminars (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2008).

CHAPTER 3

1. Amanda Claridge, *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Filippo Coarelli, *Rome and Environs: An Archaeological Guide* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007); J. C. N. Coulston and Hazel Dodge (eds.), *Ancient Rome: The Archaeology of the Eternal City*, Oxford University School of Archaeology Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University School of Archaeology, 2000).
2. Pliny, *Natural History* 36.109.
3. Christopher Smith, 'The Beginnings of Urbanization in Rome', in Robin Osborne and Barry Cunliffe (eds.), *Mediterranean Urbanization 800–600 BC, Proceedings of the British Academy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
4. Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri, *The Iron Age Community of Osteria dell'Osa: A Study of Socio-political Development in Central Tyrrhenian Italy*, New Studies in Archaeology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
5. Maria Eugenia Aubet, *The Phoenicians and the West: Politics, Colonies and Trade*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Gocha R. Tsetskhladze, *Greek Colonisation: An Account of Greek Colonies and Other Settlements Overseas*, 2 vols., Mnemosyne supplements (Leiden: Brill, 2006); John Boardman, *Greeks Overseas: Their Early Colonies and Trade*, 4th edn. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999).
6. David Ridgway, *The First Western Greeks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
7. Corinna Riva, *The Urbanization of Etruria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
8. Filippo Coarelli and Helen Patterson (eds.), *Mercator Placidissimus: The Tiber Valley in Antiquity: New Research in the Upper and Middle River Valley, Rome, 27–28 February 2004*, Quaderni di Eutopia (Rome: Quasar, 2008).
9. Colin Renfrew and John F. Cherry (eds.), *Peer Polity Interaction and*

Socio-political Change, New Directions in Archaeology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

10. Mauro Cristofani (ed.), *La grande Roma dei Tarquini: Roma, Palazzo delle esposizioni, 12 giugno—30 settembre 1990: Catalogo della mostra* (Rome: 'L'Erma' di Bretschneider, 1990).
11. Nicholas Purcell, 'Becoming Historical: The Roman Case', in David Braund and Christopher Gill (eds.), *Myth, History and Culture in Republican Rome: Studies in Honour of T. P. Wiseman* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2003).
12. Jonathon H. C. Williams, *Beyond the Rubicon: Romans and Gauls in Northern Italy*, Oxford Classical Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
13. Emma Dench, *From Barbarians to New Men: Greek, Roman and Modern Perceptions of Peoples of the Central Apennines* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
14. Ennius, *Annales* Fragment 156.
15. Polybius, *Histories* 3.22–6.
16. Kurt Raaflaub, 'Born to be Wolves? Origins of Roman Imperialism', in Robert W. Wallace and Edward M. Harris (eds.), *Transitions to Empire: Essays in Greco-Roman History 360–146 B.C. in Honor of E. Badian* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996).
17. Emilio Gabba, *Republican Rome: The Army and the Allies* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1976).
18. G. E. M. de Sainte Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World: From the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquests* (London: Duckworth, 1981).

CHAPTER 4

1. Harry Hine, 'Seismology and Vulcanology in Antiquity?', in C. J. Tuplin and T. E. Rihll (eds.), *Science and Mathematics in Ancient Greek Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Lukas Thommen, *Umweltgeschichte der Antike* (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2009).
2. Pliny, *Natural History* 36.125.
3. Robert Sallares, *The Ecology of the Ancient Greek World* (London: Duckworth, 1991), chapter 1.
4. Peter Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply in the Greco-Roman World*:

Responses to Risk and Crisis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 8–16.

5. André Tchernia, *Le Vin d'Italie romaine: Essai d'histoire économique d'après les amphores*, Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1986); José María Blázquez Martínez and José Remesal Rodríguez (eds.), *Producción y comercio del aceite en la antigüedad: Congreso I* (Madrid: Universidad Complutense, 1980); José María Blázquez Martínez and José Remesal Rodríguez (eds.), *Producción y comercio del aceite en la antigüedad: Congreso II* (Madrid: Universidad Complutense, 1982).
6. Paul Erdkamp, *The Grain Market in the Roman Empire: A Social, Political and Economic Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
7. David Mattingly, 'First Fruit? The Olive in the Roman World', in Graham Shipley and John Salmon (eds.), *Human Landscapes in Classical Antiquity: Environment and Culture* (London: Routledge, 1996).
8. Anthony C. King, 'Diet in the Roman World: A Regional Inter-site Comparison of the Mammal Bones', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 12/1 (1999).
9. Robert Sallares, 'Ecology', in Walter Scheidel, Ian Morris, and Richard P. Saller (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
10. Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (London: Routledge, 1974); William H. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1976); Paul A. Colinvaux, *Why Big Fierce Animals are Rare: An Ecologist's Perspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).
11. Barry Cunliffe, *Europe Between the Oceans: Themes and Variations, 9000 BC–AD 1000* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).
12. Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900*, Studies in Environment and History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
13. Richard Reece, 'Romanization: A Point of View', in Tom Blagg and Martin Millett (eds.), *The Early Roman Empire in the West* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1990); Nico Roymans (ed.), *From the Sword to the Plough: Three Studies in the Earliest Romanisation of Northern Gaul*, Amsterdam Archaeological Studies (Amsterdam: Amsterdam

University Press, 1996).

14. Peter Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity*, Key Themes in Ancient History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Nicholas Purcell, 'The Way We Used to Eat: Diet, Community, and History at Rome', *American Journal of Philology*, 124/3 (2003).
15. Robert Thomas and Andrew Wilson, 'Water Supply for Roman Farms in Latium and South Etruria', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 62 (1994).
16. Andrew Wilson, 'Machines, Power and the Ancient Economy', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 92 (2002).
17. David Mattingly and John Salmon (eds.), *Economies beyond Agriculture in the Classical World*, Leicester–Nottingham Studies in Ancient Society (London: Routledge, 2001).

CHAPTER 5

1. Arthur M. Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War and the Rise of Rome*, Hellenistic Culture and Society (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006).
2. Claude Nicolet (ed.), *Rome et la conquête du monde méditerranéen: 264–27 avant J.C.* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1977).
3. William Vernon Harris, 'Roman Expansion in the West', in A. E. Astin et al. (eds.), *Cambridge Ancient History*, viii: *Rome and the Mediterranean to 133 BC* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Stephen L. Dyson, *The Creation of the Roman Frontier* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).
4. Nicholas Purcell, 'The Creation of Provincial Landscape: The Roman Impact on Cisalpine Gaul', in Tom Blagg and M. Millett (eds.), *The Early Roman Empire in the West* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1990).
5. Saskia T. Roselaar, *Public Land in the Roman Republic: A Social and Economic History of *Ager Publicus* in Italy, 396–89 BC*, Oxford Studies in Roman Society and Law (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
6. John Rich, 'Fear, Greed and Glory: The Causes of Roman War-Making in the Middle Republic', in John Rich and Graham Shipley (eds.), *War and Society in the Roman World* (London: Routledge, 1993).
7. Livy, *From the Foundation of the City* 45.12.
8. Nicholas Purcell, 'On the Sacking of Carthage and Corinth', in

Doreen Innes, Harry Hine, and Christopher Pelling (eds.), *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

9. Beard, *The Roman Triumph*.
10. Geoffrey Conrad and Arthur A. Demarest, *Religion and Empire: The Dynamics of Aztec and Inca Expansionism*, New Directions in Archaeology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Peter R. Bedford, 'The Neo-Assyrian Empire', in Morris and Scheidel (eds.), *The Dynamics of Ancient Empires*.
11. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327–70 B.C.*; Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp, 'Conquest, Competition and Consensus: Roman Expansion in Italy and the Rise of the "Nobilitas"', *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 42/1 (1993).
12. Derk Bodde, 'The State and Empire of Ch'in', in Denis Twitchett and Michael Loewe (eds.), *The Cambridge History of China, i: The Ch'in and Han Empires, 221 B.C.–A.D. 220* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); R. D. S. Yates, 'Cosmos, Central Authority and Communities in the Early Chinese Empire', in Alcock et al. (eds.), *Empires*.
13. Arthur M. Eckstein, *Senate and General: Individual Decision Making and Roman Foreign Relations, 264–194 B.C.* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987); John S. Richardson, *Hispaniae: Spain and the Development of Roman Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
14. Filippo Coarelli, 'Public Building in Rome between the Second Punic War and Sulla', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 45 (1977).
15. Polybius, *Histories* 6.17.
16. John S. Richardson, 'The Spanish Mines and the Development of Provincial Taxation in the Second Century B.C.', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 66 (1976).
17. Livy, *From the Foundation of the City* 38.51.
18. Harriet I. Flower, *Ancestor Masks and Aristocratic Power in Roman Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

CHAPTER 6

1. David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw their Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2001).
2. Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*

(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).

3. Richard P. Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society* (London: Routledge, 1989).
4. Claude Eilers, *Roman Patrons of Greek Cities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
5. Ernst Badian, *Foreign Clientelae (264 – 70 BC)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958).
6. David Braund, *Rome and the Friendly King: The Character of the Client Kingship* (London: Croom Helm, 1982).
7. Sallust, *Jugurtha* 8.
8. *The Achievements of the Deified Augustus* 26.4.
9. David Johnston, *Roman Law in Context*, ed. Paul Cartledge and Peter Garnsey, *Key Themes in Ancient History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
10. Plutarch, *Life of Cato the Elder* 21.
- 11.. Andrea Giardina and Aldo Schiavone (eds.), *Società romana e produzione schiavistica* (Rome: Laterza, 1981).
12. Dominic Rathbone, 'The Development of Agriculture in the Ager Cosanus during the Roman Republic: Problems of Evidence and Interpretation', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 71 (1981).
13. Nicholas Purcell, 'The Roman Villa and the Landscape of Production', in Cornell and Lomas (eds.), *Urban Society in Roman Italy*; Neville Morley, *Metropolis and Hinterland: The City of Rome and the Italian Economy 200 B.C.–A.D. 200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
14. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'Elites and Trade in the Roman Town', in John Rich and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (eds.), *City and Country in the Ancient World* (London: Routledge, 1991).
15. Susan M. Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen during the Late Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).
16. Keith Bradley, *Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire: A Study in Social Control* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).
17. Apuleius, *The Golden Ass* 9.12.
18. Nicholas Purcell, 'Wine and Wealth in Ancient Italy', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 75 (1985); Tchernia, *Le Vin d'Italie romaine*; Jean-Paul Morel, 'The Transformation of Italy 300–133 BC', in Astin et

- al. (eds.), *Cambridge Ancient History*, viii; Jesper Carlsen and Elio Lo Cascio (eds.), *Agricoltura e scambi nell'Italia tardo-Repubblicana*, Pragmateiai (Bari: Edipuglia, 2009).
19. Strabo, *Geography* 14.5.4 and 10.5.2.
20. Philip de Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
21. *IG IX*². 1.241.
22. William Vernon Harris, 'Demography, Geography and the Sources of Roman Slaves', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 89 (1999).
23. P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 B.C.–A.D. 14* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971); Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves: Sociological Studies in Roman History I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Nathan Stewart Rosenstein, *Rome at War: Farms, Families and Death in the Middle Republic* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Keith Bradley, 'Slavery in the Roman Republic', in Keith Bradley and Paul Cartledge (eds.), *Cambridge World History of Slavery*, i: *The Ancient Mediterranean World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

CHAPTER 7

1. Erich Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*, 2 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984).
2. Ferrary, *Philhellénisme et impérialisme*.
3. Elizabeth M. Brumfiel and John W. Fox (eds.), *Factional Competition and Political Development in the New World*, New Directions in Archaeology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
4. David Braund, 'Royal Wills and Rome', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 51 (1983).
5. Sallust, *Jugurtha* 35.
6. Mark Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past: A Social and Economic Explanation* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1973).
7. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*.
8. Brent D Shaw, '“Eaters of flesh, drinkers of milk”: The Ancient Mediterranean Ideology of the Pastoral Nomad', *Ancient Society*, 13 (1982); Christopher B. Krebs, 'Borealism: Caesar, Seneca, Tacitus and the Roman Discourse about the Germanic North', in Erich Gruen (ed.), *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, Issues

- and Debates (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2011).
9. David Abulafia, 'Mediterraneans', in William Vernon Harris (ed.), *Rethinking the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
 10. Cunliffe, *Europe Between the Oceans*.
 11. Owen Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontier of China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940).
 12. John R. Collis, *The European Iron Age* (London: Batsford, 1984); Barry Cunliffe, *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians: Spheres of Interaction* (London: Batsford, 1988).
 13. Andrew Lintott, 'Imperial Expansion and Moral Decline in the Roman Republic', *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 21 (1972); Barbara Levick, 'Morals, Politics and the Fall of the Roman Republic', *Greece & Rome*, 29 (1982).
 14. Mark Hassall, Michael H. Crawford, and Joyce Reynolds, 'Rome and the Eastern Provinces at the End of the Second Century BC', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 64 (1974).
 15. Fergus Millar, 'The Political Character of the Classical Roman Republic, 200–151 B.C.', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 74 (1984); Fergus Millar, 'Politics, Persuasion and the People before the Social War (150–90 B.C.)', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 76 (1986).
 16. A. N. Sherwin-White, 'The Lex Repetundarum and the Political Ideas of Gaius Gracchus', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 72 (1982); Andrew Erskine, *The Hellenistic Stoa: Political Thought and Action* (London: Duckworth, 1990).
 17. P. A. Brunt, 'Italian Aims at the Time of the Social War', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 55 (1965); Gabba, *Republican Rome, the Army and the Allies*; Henrik Mouritsen, *Italian Unification: A Study in Ancient and Modern Historiography*, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Supplements (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1998).

CHAPTER 8

1. Aelius Aristides, *Roman Oration* 61.
2. Catharine Edwards, *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
3. Sallust, *Jugurtha* 4.5.
4. Tacitus, *Agricola* 1.
5. Donald Earl, *The Moral and Political Tradition in Rome*, Aspects of

Greek and Roman Life (London: Thames and Hudson, 1967).

6. Elizabeth Rawson, 'Religion and Politics in the Late Second Century B.C. at Rome', *Phoenix*, 28/2 (1974).
7. Livy, *From the Foundation of the City* Preface.
8. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'Family and Inheritance in the Augustan Marriage-Laws', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 207 (1981); Karl Galinsky, *Augustan Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).
9. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*.
10. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Golden Age and Sin in Augustan Ideology', *Past and Present*, 95 (1982).
11. John North, 'Roman Reactions to Empire', *Scripta Classica Israelica*, 12 (1993).
12. Dionysius, *Roman Antiquities* 7.70–3.
13. John Scheid, *Quand croire c'est faire: Les rites sacrificiels des Romains* (Paris: Aubier, 2005); Clifford Ando, *The Matter of the Gods: Religion and the Roman Empire* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008).
14. John North, 'Democratic Politics in Republican Rome', *Past and Present*, 126 (1990); Mary Beard and John North (eds.), *Pagan Priests* (London: Duckworth, 1990).
15. Rebecca Preston, 'Roman Questions, Greek Answers: Plutarch and the Construction of Identity', in Simon Goldhill (ed.), *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Mary Beard, 'A Complex of Times: No More Sheep on Romulus' Birthday', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 33 (1987).
16. Apuleius, *Golden Ass* 11.5.
17. Mary Beard, 'Cicero and Divination: The Formation of a Latin Discourse', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 76 (1986); David Sedley, *Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
18. Clifford Ando, 'Interpretatio romana', *Classical Philology*, 100 (2005).
19. Paul Veyne, *Did the Greeks Believe in their Myths? An Essay in the Constitutive Imagination*, trans. Paula Wissing (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Denis Feeney, *Literature and Religion at*

Rome: Culture, Contexts and Beliefs, Latin Literature in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

20. Glen Bowersock, 'The Mechanics of Subversion in the Roman Provinces', in Adalberto Giovannini (ed.), *Oppositions et résistances à l'empire d'Auguste à Trajan*, Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique (Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 1987).
21. James B. Rives, 'The Decree of Decius and the Religion of Empire', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 89 (1999).
22. Conrad and Demarest, *Religion and Empire*; John Moreland, 'The Carolingian Empire: Rome Reborn?', in Alcock et al. (eds.), *Empires*.
23. Jörg Rüpke, *Domi militiae: Die religiöse Konstruktion des Krieges in Rom* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1990).
24. Beard, *The Roman Triumph*.
25. Eric Orlin, *Temples, Religion and Politics in the Roman Republic*, Mnemosyne Supplements (Leiden: Brill, 1996).
26. John Scheid, 'Graeco ritu: A Typically Roman Way of Honouring the Gods', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 97 Greece in Rome: Influence, Integration, Resistance (1995).
27. Mary Beard, 'The Roman and the Foreign: The Cult of the "Great Mother" in Imperial Rome', in Nicholas Thomas and Caroline Humphrey (eds.), *Shamanism, History and the State* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).
28. Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, *Religions of Rome*, i: A History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 313–63; Clifford Ando, 'A Religion for the Empire', in A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik (eds.), *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Alison Cooley, 'Beyond Rome and Latium: Roman Religion in the Age of Augustus', in Celia Schultz and Paul B. Harvey (eds.), *Religion in Republican Italy*, Yale Classical Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
29. Richard Gordon, 'Religion in the Roman Empire: The Civic Compromise and its Limits', in Beard and North (eds.), *Pagan Priests*.
30. Greg Woolf, 'Divinity and Power in Ancient Rome', in Brisch (ed.), *Religion and Power*.
31. Simon Price, *Rituals and Power in Roman Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Ittai Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, Oxford Classical Monographs (Oxford: Oxford

University Press, 2002).

32. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*.

CHAPTER 9

1. Arthur Keaveney, *Sulla: The Last Republican*, 2nd edn. (London: Routledge, 2005).
2. Flower, *Ancestor Masks and Aristocratic Power in Roman Culture*.
3. Brunt, 'Laus Imperii'; Andrew Riggsby, *War in Words: Caesar in Gaul and Rome* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2006).
4. De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*.
5. Erich Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974); Liv Maria H Yarrow, *Historiography at the End of the Republic: Provincial Perspectives on Roman Rule* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
6. Katherine Clarke, 'Universal Perspectives in Historiography', in Christina Shuttleworth Kraus (ed.), *The Limits of Historiography: Genre and Narrative in Ancient Historical Texts*, Mnemosyne Supplements (Leiden: Brill, 1999).
7. Hermann Strasburger, 'Poseidonios on Problems of the Roman Empire', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 55/1–2 (1965); I. G. Kidd, 'Posidonius as Philosopher-Historian', in Miriam Griffin and Jonathon Barnes (eds.), *Philosophia togata, i: Essays on Philosophy and Roman Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).
8. Barbara Levick, 'Popular in the Provinces? À Propos of Tacitus Annales 1.2.2', *Acta classica*, 37 (1994).
9. Tacitus, *Annales* 1.2.2.
10. Josef Wiesehöfer (ed.), *Die Partherreich und seine Zeugnisse*, Historia Einzelschriften (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998).

CHAPTER 10

1. Michael H. Crawford, 'Rome and the Greek World: Economic Relationships', *Economic History Review*, 30/1 (1977).
2. John H. D'Arms, *The Romans on the Bay of Naples: A Social and Cultural History of the Villas and their Owners from 150 B.C. to A.D. 100* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970); Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Eleanor Windsor Leach, *The Social Life of Painting in Ancient Rome and on the Bay of*

Naples (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

3. Michael H. Crawford, 'Greek Intellectuals and the Roman Aristocracy in the First Century BC', in Peter Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (eds.), *Imperialism in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).
4. Elizabeth Rawson, *Cicero: A Portrait* (London: Allen Lane, 1975).
5. Keith Hopkins, *Death and Renewal: Sociological Studies in Roman History II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
6. M. Cébeillac-Gervason (ed.), *Les Bourgeoisies municipales italiennes aux II^e et I^{er} siècles av. J-C* (Naples: Éditions du CNRS & Bibliothèque de l'Institut Français de Naples, 1981).
7. Catherine Steel, *Cicero, Rhetoric and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
8. Cicero, *On Duties* 2.27.
9. Cicero, *To his Brother Quintus* 1.1.
10. Richardson, *The Language of Empire*.
11. D. S. Levene, 'Sallust's Jugurtha: An "Historical Fragment"', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 82 (1992).
12. Sallust, *Histories* 4.69.17.
13. Claude Nicolet, *Space, Geography and Politics in the Early Roman Empire*, trans. Hélène Leclerc, *Jerome Lectures* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991).
14. Gruen, *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome*; Thomas Habinek (ed.), *The Politics of Latin Literature: Writing, Identity and Empire in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
15. Elizabeth Rawson, *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic* (London: Duckworth, 1985); Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'Review Article: Greek Knowledge, Roman Power', *Classical Philology*, 83/3 (1988); Elaine Fantham, *Roman Literary Culture from Cicero to Apuleius*, *Ancient Society and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).
16. Purcell, 'Becoming Historical'.
17. D'Arms, *The Romans on the Bay of Naples: A Social and Cultural History of the Villas and their Owners from 150 B.C. to A.D. 100*; M. Frederiksen, *Campania* (London: British School at Rome, 1984).
18. T. Keith Dix, 'The Library of Lucullus', *Athenaeum*, 88/2 (2000).

19. Mantha Zarmakoupi (ed.), *The Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum: Archaeology, Reception and Digital Reconstruction* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010).
20. Marcello Gigante, *Philodemus in Italy: The Books from Herculaneum*, trans. Dirk Obbink, *The Body, in Theory: Histories of Cultural Materialism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995); David Sider, *The Library of the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum* (Los Angeles: Getty, 2005).
21. E. Bartman, 'Sculptural Collecting and Display in the Private Realm', in E. Gazda (ed.), *Roman Art in the Private Sphere: New Perspectives on the Architecture and Decor of the Domus, Villa and Insula* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991).
22. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
23. David Sedley, 'Philosophical Allegiance in the Greco-Roman World', in Griffin and Barnes (eds.), *Philosophia togata*, i.
24. Simon Swain, 'Bilingualism in Cicero? The Evidence of Code-Switching', in J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (eds.), *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
25. Ingo Gildenhard, *Paideia Romana: Cicero's Tusculan Disputations*, ed. Tim Whitmarsh and James Warren, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society Supplements* (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 2007).
26. Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 1.1.

CHAPTER 11

1. Elizabeth Rawson, 'Caesar's Heritage: Hellenistic Kings and their Roman Equals', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 65 (1975).
2. Suetonius, *Life of the Deified Augustus* 101.
3. Nicholas Purcell, 'Livia and the Womanhood of Rome', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 32 (1986).
4. Susan Wood, 'Messalina, Wife of Claudius: Propaganda Successes and Failures of his Reign', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 5 (1992); Susan Wood, 'Diva Drusilla Panthea and the Sisters of Caligula', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 99/3 (1995).
5. R. R. R. Smith, 'The Imperial Reliefs from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 77 (1987).

6. Zvi Yavetz, *Plebs and Princes* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).
7. Richard J. A. Talbert, *The Senate of Imperial Rome* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).
8. Ségolène Demougin, Hubert Devijver, and Marie-Thérèse Raepsaet-Charlier (eds.), *L'Ordre équestre: Histoire d'une aristocratie (Ile siècle av. J.-C.–IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.)*, Collection de l'École Française de Rome (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1999).
9. Averil Cameron, 'The Construction of Court Ritual: The Byzantine Book of Ceremonies', in David Cannadine and Simon Price (eds.), *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
10. Yates, 'Cosmos, Central Authority and Communities in the Early Chinese Empire'; Michael J. Puett, *To Become a God: Cosmology, Sacrifice, and Self-Divinization in Early China*, Harvard-Yenching Institute monograph series (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002).
11. Amélie Kuhrt, 'Usurpation, Conquest and Ceremonial: From Babylon to Persia', in Cannadine and Price (eds.), *Rituals of Royalty*; Maria Brosius, 'New out of Old? Court and Court Ceremonies in Achaemenid Persia', in Antony Spawforth (ed.), *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
12. Herodotus, *Histories* 3.80–2, Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 52.2–40.
13. Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things* 5.1105–60. Karl August Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New York: Yale University Press, 1957).
14. John A. Hall, *Powers and Liberties: The Causes and Consequences of the Rise of the West* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1985); Patricia Crone, *Pre-industrial Societies*, New Perspectives on the Past (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).
15. Clifford Geertz, 'Centers, Kings and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power', in Joseph Ben-David and Terry Nichols Clarke (eds.), *Culture and its Creators: Essays in Honor of Edward Shils* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977; reprint, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 121–46).
16. Jonathon Spence, *Emperor of China: Self Portrait of K'ang-hsi* (London: Cape, 1974).

17. Michel Austin, 'Hellenistic Kings, War and the Economy', *Classical Quarterly*, 36/2 (1986).
18. Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire*; Claude Nicolet, 'Augustus, Government and the Propertied Classes', in Fergus Millar and Erich Segal (eds.), *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).
19. Fergus Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (London: Duckworth, 1977).
20. Norbert Elias, *The Court Society* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1983).
21. Keith Hopkins, 'Divine Emperors, or the Symbolic Unity of the Roman Empire', in *Conquerors and Slaves: Sociological Studies in Roman History*, i (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).
22. Price, *Rituals and Power in Roman Asia Minor*.
23. Brian Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army 31 BC–AD 235* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).
24. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Imperial Court', in Alan Bowman, Edward Champlin, and Andrew Lintott (eds.), *Cambridge Ancient History*, x: *The Augustan Empire 43 B.C.–A.D. 69* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Aloys Winterling, *Aula Caesaris: Studien zur Institutionalisierung des römischen Kaiserhofes in der Zeit von Augustus bis Commodus (31 v. Chr.–192 n. Chr.)* (Munich: R. Oldenburg, 1999); Jeremy Paterson, 'Friends in High Places: The Creation of the Court of the Roman Emperor', in Spawforth (ed.), *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies*.
25. Elias, *The Court Society*; Jeroen Duindam, *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern European Court* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1994).
26. Paul Zanker, 'Domitian's Palace on the Palatine and the Imperial Image', in Alan Bowman et al. (eds.), *Representations of Empire: Rome and the Mediterranean World*, Proceedings of the British Academy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
27. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'Civilis princeps: Between Citizen and King', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 72 (1982); Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Imperial Court'.
28. Helmut Halfmann, *Itinera principum: Geschichte und Typologie der Kaiserreisen im Römischen Reich*, Heidelberger althistorische Beiträge und epigraphische Studien (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1986).

29. Catharine Edwards and Greg Woolf (eds.), *Rome the Cosmopolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

CHAPTER 12

1. Keith Hopkins, 'The Political Economy of the Roman Empire', in Ian Morris and Walter Scheidel (eds.), *The Dynamics of Ancient Empires: State Power from Assyria to Byzantium*, Oxford Studies in Early Empires (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).
2. Michael H. Crawford, *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic: Italy and the Mediterranean Economy* (London: Methuen, 1985).
3. Peter Rhodes, 'After the Three-Bar Sigma Controversy: The History of Athenian Imperialism Reassessed', *Classical Quarterly*, 58/2 (2008).
4. J. G. Manning, 'Coinage as Code in Ptolemaic Egypt', in William Vernon Harris (ed.), *The Monetary Systems of the Greeks and Romans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
5. Bang and Bayly, *Tributary Empires in History*.
6. Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*.
7. Peter Fibiger Bang, *The Roman Bazaar: A Comparative Study of Trade and Markets in a Tributary Empire*, Cambridge Classical Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
8. P. A. Brunt, 'The Revenues of Rome', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 71 (1981); P. A. Brunt, 'Publicans in the Principate', in *Roman Imperial Themes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); Michel Cottier et al. (eds.), *The Customs Law of Asia*, Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
9. Chapter 4 above.
10. Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply in the Greco-Roman World*.
11. Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000); Nicholas Purcell, 'The Boundless Sea of Unlikeness? On Defining the Mediterranean', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 18/2 (2004).
12. Alan Bowman and Andrew Wilson (eds.), *Quantifying the Roman Economy: Methods and Problems*, Oxford Studies on the Roman Economy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
13. Anthony John Parker, *Ancient Shipwrecks of the Mediterranean and the Roman Provinces*, British Archaeological Reports International

Series (Oxford: Tempus Reparatum, 1992); Andrew Wilson, 'Approaches to Quantifying Roman Trade', in Bowman and Wilson (eds.), *Quantifying the Roman Economy*.

14. Purcell, 'Wine and Wealth in Ancient Italy'; Greg Woolf, 'Imperialism, Empire and the Integration of the Roman Economy', *World Archaeology*, 23/3 (1992).
15. Wilson, 'Machines, Power and the Ancient Economy'; François de Callataj, 'The Graeco-Roman Economy in the Super Long Run: Lead, Copper, and Shipwrecks', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 18/1 (2005); Dennis P. Kehoe, 'The Early Roman Empire: Production', in Scheidel, Morris, and Saller (eds.), *Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*.
16. J. B. Ward-Perkins, 'From Republic to Empire: Reflections on the Early Provincial Architecture of the Roman West', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 60 (1970).
17. Greg Woolf, *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 169–205.
18. Susan E. Alcock, *Graecia capta: The Landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
19. Keith Hopkins, 'Economic Growth and Towns in Classical Antiquity', in Philip Abrams and E. A. Wrigley (eds.), *Towns in Societies: Essays in Economic History and Historical Sociology*, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978); R. F. J. Jones, 'A False Start? The Roman Urbanisation of Western Europe', *World Archaeology*, 19/1 (1987); Greg Woolf, 'The Roman Urbanization of the East', in Susan E. Alcock (ed.), *The Early Roman Empire in the East* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997).
20. Keith Hopkins, 'Rome, Taxes, Rents and Trade', *Kodai*, 6/7 (1995/6); R. P. Duncan-Jones, 'Taxes, Trade and Money', in *Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
21. R. P. Duncan-Jones, 'The Impact of the Antonine Plague', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 9 (1996).
22. Christer Bruun, 'The Antonine Plague and the "Third-Century Crisis"', in Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn, and Daniëlle Slootjes (eds.), *Crises and the Roman Empire*, Impact of Empire (Leiden: Brill, 2007).
23. Orlin, *Temples, Religion and Politics in the Roman Republic*.
24. Roselaar, *Public Land in the Roman Republic*.

25. Coarelli, 'Public Building in Rome between the Second Punic War and Sulla'.
26. Brunt, 'Publicans in the Principate'.
27. Cottier et al., *The Customs Law of Asia*.
28. Jérôme France, *Quadragesima Galliarum: L'organisation douanière des provinces alpestres, gauloises et germaniques de l'Empire romain, 1er siècle avant J.-C.–3er siècle après J.-C.*, Collections de l'École Française à Rome (Rome, 2001).
29. Richardson, 'The Spanish Mines and the Development of Provincial Taxation in the Second Century B.C.'.
30. Dominic Rathbone, 'The Imperial Finances', in Bowman, Champlin, and Lintott (eds.), *Cambridge Ancient History*, x.

CHAPTER 13

1. Tacitus, *Germany* 37.
2. Rolf Michael Schneider, *Bunte Barbaren: Orientalenstatuen aus farbigem Marmor in der römischen Repräsentationskunst* (Worms: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1986); R. R. R. Smith, 'Simulacra gentium: The Ethne from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 78 (1988); M. Sapelli (ed.), *Provinciae fideles: Il fregio del tempio di Adriano in Campo Marzio* (Milan: Electa, 1999).
3. Erich Gruen, 'The Expansion of the Empire under Augustus', in Alan Bowman, Edward Champlin, and Andrew Lintott (eds.), *Cambridge Ancient History*, x: *The Augustan Empire 43 B.C.–A.D. 69* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
4. Nicolet, *Space, Geography and Politics in the Early Roman Empire*.
5. Strabo, *Geography* 4.5.32.
6. Appian, *Preface*.
7. Garnsey and Saller, *The Roman Empire*.
8. A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973); Peter Garnsey, 'Roman Citizenship and Roman Law in Late Antiquity', in Simon Swain and Mark Edwards (eds.), *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
9. Paul Veyne, *Le Pain et le cirque: Sociologie historique d'un pluralisme politique* (Paris: Seuil, 1976); Arjan Zuiderhoek, *The Politics of Munificence in the Roman Empire: Citizens, Elites and Benefactors in Asia Minor*, *Greek Culture in the Roman World* (Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press, 2009).

10. Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire: From the First Century AD to the Third* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).
11. Fergus Millar, 'Emperors, Frontiers and Foreign Relations, 31 BC to AD 378', *Britannia*, 13 (1982).
12. Tacitus, *Annales* 4.4–5.
13. Alan Bowman, *Life and Letters on the Roman Frontier: Vindolanda and its People* (London: British Museum Press, 1994).
14. Benjamin Isaac, *The Limits of Empire: The Roman Army in the East* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).
15. Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army 31 BC–AD 235*.
16. Egon Flaig, *Den Kaiser herausfordern: Die Usurpation im römischen Reich* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Campus Verlag, 1992).
17. Brent D. Shaw, 'Soldiers and Society: The Army in Numidia', *Opus*, 2 (1983).
18. Ramsay MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian in the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963).
19. Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontier of China*.
20. Jürgen Kunow, *Der römische Import in der Germania libera bis zu den Markomannenkrieg: Studien zu Bronze- und Glasgefäßen*, Göttinger Schriften zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte (Neumunster: K. Wachholtz, 1983); L. Hedeager, 'Empire, Frontier and the Barbarian Hinterland: Rome and Northern Europe from A.B. 1–400', in Michael Rowlands, Mogens Trolle Larsen, and Kristian Kristiansen (eds.), *Centre and Periphery in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Michael G. Fulford, 'Roman and Barbarian: The Economy of Roman Frontier Systems', in J. C. Barrett (ed.), *Barbarians and Romans in North-West Europe from the Later Republic to Late Antiquity*, International Series (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1989).
21. Michael Kulikowski, *Rome's Gothic Wars from the Third Century to Alaric*, Key Conflicts of Classical Antiquity (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); John Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome 213–496 (Caracalla to Clovis)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
22. Kulikowski, *Rome's Gothic Wars from the Third Century to Alaric*.
23. Brian Campbell, 'War and Diplomacy: Rome and Parthia 31 BC–AD

235', in John Rich and Graham Shipley (eds.), *War and Society in the Roman World* (London: Routledge, 1993).

CHAPTER 14

1. Miriam Griffin, 'Claudius in Tacitus', *Classical Quarterly*, 40/2 (1990).
2. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*.
3. Garnsey, 'Roman Citizenship and Roman Law in Late Antiquity'.
4. Fergus Millar, 'Empire and City, Augustus to Julian: Obligations, Excuses and Statuses', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 73 (1983).
5. J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *Romans and Aliens* (London: Duckworth, 1979); Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).
6. Scheid, 'Graeco ritu'.
7. Julián Gonzáles, 'Lex Irnitana: A New Copy of the Flavian Municipal Law', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 76 (1986).
8. Acts 21–2.
9. MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian in the Later Roman Empire*; Adrian Goldsworthy and Ian Haynes (eds.), *The Roman Army as a Community*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplements* (Portsmouth, RI: *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 1999).
10. Fikret K. Yegul, *Baths and Bathing in the Roman World* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992).
11. I. Nielsen, *Thermae et Balnea: The Architecture and Cultural History of Roman Baths*, 2 vols. (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1990).
12. Michael Wörrle, *Stadt und Fest in kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien: Studien zu einer agonistischen Stiftung aus Oinoanda*, *Vestigia* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1988); Onno van Nijf, 'Local Heroes: Athletics, Festivals and Elite Self-Fashioning in the Roman East', in Goldhill (ed.), *Being Greek under Rome*; Jason König, *Athletics and Literature in the Roman Empire*, ed. Susan E. Alcock, Jas Elsner, and Simon Goldhill, *Greek Culture in the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Zahra Newby, *Greek Athletics in the Roman World: Victory and Virtue*, ed. Simon Price, R. R. R. Smith, and Oliver Taplin, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).
13. William J. Slater (ed.), *Dining in a Classical Context* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991); Emily Gowers, *The Loaded*

Table: Representations of Food in Roman Literature (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Oswyn Murray and Manuela Tecusan (eds.), *In vino veritas* (London: British School at Rome, 1995); Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity*; Purcell, 'The Way We Used to Eat'; Jason König, 'Symptotic Dialogue in the First to Fifth Centuries CE', in Simon Goldhill (ed.), *The End of Dialogue in Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

14. Simon Swain, *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism and Power in the Greek World, AD 50–250* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Tim Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitations* (Oxford: Oxford, 2001); Susan E. Alcock, John F. Cherry, and Jas Elsner (eds.), *Pausanias: Travel and Memory in Roman Greece* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
15. Greg Woolf, 'Becoming Roman, Staying Greek: Culture, Identity and the Civilizing Process in the Roman East', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 40 (1994); Stephen Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry*, Latin Literature in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution*.
16. John Percival, *The Roman Villa: An Historical Introduction* (London: Batsford, 1976); Roger Ling, *Roman Painting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Jas Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph: The Art of the Roman Empire, AD 100–450*, Oxford History of Art (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Katherine M. Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Leach, *The Social Life of Painting in Ancient Rome and on the Bay of Naples*.
17. David Mattingly (ed.), *Dialogues in Roman Imperialism: Power, Discourse and Discrepant Experience in the Roman Empire*, Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplements (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1997); Robert Witcher, 'Globalisation and Roman Imperialism: Perspectives on Identities in Roman Italy', in Edward Herring and Kathryn Lomas (eds.), *The Emergence of State Identities in Italy in the First Millennium B.C.* (London: Accordia Research Institute, 2000); Richard Hingley, *Globalizing Roman Culture: Unity, Diversity and Empire* (London: Routledge, 2005); Rebecca J. Sweetman, 'Roman Knossos: The Nature of a Globalized City', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 111/1 (2007); R. Bruce Hitchner, 'Globalization avant la lettre: Globalization and the History of the Roman Empire', *New Global Studies*, 2/2 (2008).
18. T. C. Champion, 'Mass Migration in Later Prehistoric Europe', in Per Sörbom (ed.), *Transport Technology and Social Change: Papers*

Delivered at Tekniska Museet Symposium No. 2, Stockholm, 1979 (Stockholm: Tekniska Museet, 1980); Nicholas Purcell, 'Mobility and the Polis', in Oswyn Murray and Simon Price (eds.), *The Greek City from Homer to Alexander* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

19. John F. Matthews, 'Hostages, Philosophers, Pilgrims, and the Diffusion of Ideas in the Late Roman Mediterranean and Near East', in F. M. Clover and R.S. Humphreys (eds.), *Tradition and Innovation in Late Antiquity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).
20. David Noy, *Foreigners at Rome: Citizens and Strangers* (London: Duckworth, 2000); Edwards and Woolf, *Rome the Cosmopolis*; L. Wierschowski, *Fremde in Gallien: 'Gallier' in der Fremde: Die epigraphisch bezeugte Mobilität in, von und nach Gallien vom 1. bis 3. Jh. n. Chr.*, Texte-Übersetzungen-Kommentare 159, Historia Einzelschriften (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2001); Hella Eckart (ed.), *Roman Diasporas: Archaeological Approaches to Mobility and Diversity in the Roman Empire*, Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplements (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2010).
21. Millar, 'Empire and City, Augustus to Julian'; William Broadhead, 'Migration and Transformation in Northern Italy in the 3rd–1st Centuries BC', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 44 (2000); Claudia Moatti (ed.), *La Mobilité des personnes en Méditerranée de l'antiquité à l'époque moderne: Procédures de contrôle et documents d'identification*, Collection de l'École Française de Rome (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2004); Claudia Moatti and Wolfgang Kaiser (eds.), *Gens de passage en Méditerranée de l'antiquité à l'époque moderne: Procédures de contrôle et d'identification*, Collection L'Atelier Méditerranéen (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2007).
22. Erich Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews among Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002); Christopher P. Jones, 'A Syrian at Lyon', *American Journal of Philology*, 99/3 (1978).
23. Ramsay MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).
24. Swain, *Hellenism and Empire*; Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society 200 BCE to 640 CE*, ed. R. Stephen Humphreys, William Chester Jordan, and Peter Schäfer, *Jews, Christians and Muslims from the Ancient to the Modern World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).
25. Elias Bickermann, 'Origines Gentium', *Classical Philology*, 47

(1952); T. Peter Wiseman, 'Domi nobiles and the Roman Cultural Élite', in Cébeillac-Gervason (ed.), *Les Bourgeoisies municipales italiennes aux II^e et I^{er} siècles av. J.-C.*; Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*; Alan Cameron, *Greek Mythography in the Roman World*, ed. Donald J. Mastronarde, American Philological Association: American Classical Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Simon Price, 'Local Mythologies in the Greek East', in Christopher Howgego, Volker Heuchert, and Andrew Burnett (eds.), *Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Hans-Joachim Gehrke, 'Heroen als Grenzgänger zwischen Griechen und Barbaren', in Erich Gruen (ed.), *Cultural Borrowings and Ethnic Appropriations in Antiquity*, Oriens et Occidens: Studien zu antiken Kulturkontakten und ihren Nachleben (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005); Woolf, *Tales of the Barbarians*.

CHAPTER 15

1. Matthew B. Roller, *Constructing Autocracy: Aristocrats and Emperors in Julio-Claudian Rome* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).
2. Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall, *Eusebius' Life of Constantine: Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999); Anthony Bowen and Peter Garnsey, *Lactantius' Divine Institutes*, vol. xl, Translated Texts for Historians (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003); Roger Rees, *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy*, Debates and Documents in Ancient History (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004).
3. Canepa, *The Two Eyes of the Earth*, 45.
4. Christopher Kelly, *Attila the Hun: Barbarian Terror and the Fall of the Roman Empire* (London: The Bodley Head, 2008); Roger Batty, *Rome and the Nomads: The Pontic-Danubian Realm in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
5. Roger Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, 2 vols. (Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1981–3).
6. Swain, *Hellenism and Empire*.
7. Ewan Bowie, 'The Greeks and their Past in the Second Sophistic', *Past and Present*, 46 (1970); Philip A. Stadter, *Arrian of Nicomedia* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); Fergus Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); G. J. D. Aalders, 'Cassius Dio and the Greek World', *Mnemosyne*,

8. Graeme Clarke (ed.), *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Rushcutters Bay, NSW: Australian National University Press, 1990); Roger Rees (ed.), *Romane memento: Vergil in the Fourth Century* (London: Duckworth, 2003); Gavin Kelly, *Ammianus Marcellinus: The Allusive Historian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
9. John F. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court, A.D. 364–425* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).
10. Simon Corcoran, *Empire of the Tetrarchs: Imperial Pronouncements and Government, AD 284–324* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).
11. A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1964).
12. Christopher Kelly, *Ruling the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004).
13. Ramsay MacMullen, *Corruption and the Decline of Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).
14. Garnsey and Humfress, *The Evolution of the Late Antique World*, 9–51.
15. Sabine MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity, Transformation of the Classical Heritage* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981).
16. Julian, *Caesars* 315A.
17. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Civilis princeps'.
18. Michael McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the Early Medieval West*, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
19. W. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
20. Jill Harries and Ian Wood (eds.), *The Theodosian Code: Studies in the Imperial Law of Late Antiquity* (London: Duckworth, 1993); John F. Matthews, *Laying down the Law: A Study of the Theodosian Code* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
21. Peter Heather, *Goths and Romans 332–489* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991); Hugh Elton, *Warfare in Roman Europe, AD 350–425* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996). Kulikowski, *Rome's Gothic Wars from the Third Century to Alaric*.
22. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome 213–496*.
23. Edith Mary Wightman, *Roman Trier and the Treveri* (London: Hart-

Davis, 1970).

24. John Drinkwater and Hugh Elton (eds.), *Fifth Century Gaul: A Crisis of Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
25. Raymond Van Dam, *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul*, Transformation of the Classical Heritage (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985).
26. Jill Harries, *Sidonius Apollinaris and the Fall of Rome, AD 407–485* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).
27. Christian Courtois, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique* (Paris: Arts et Métiers Graphiques, 1955).
28. Julia M. H. Smith, *Europe after Rome: A New Cultural History, 500–1000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
29. Chris Wickham, 'The Other Transition: From the Ancient World to Feudalism', *Past and Present*, 103 (1984).
30. Peter Heather, 'Cassiodorus and the Rise of the Amals: Genealogy and the Goths under Hun Domination', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 79 (1989).
31. Peter H. Sawyer and Ian Wood (eds.), *Early Medieval Kingship* (Leeds: The School of History, University of Leeds, 1977).

CHAPTER 16

1. Steven Mithen and Pascal Boyer, 'Anthropomorphism and the Evolution of Cognition', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 2/4 (1996); Stewart E. Guthrie, 'Anthropological Theories of Religion', in Michael Martin (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Atheism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
2. Arthur Darby Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933).
3. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind*, Mentor Books (New York: New American Library, 1964); Jonathon Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990); Talad Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005).

4. John North, 'The Development of Religious Pluralism', in Judith Lieu, John North, and Tessa Rajak (eds.), *The Jews among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire* (London: Routledge, 1992); John North, 'Pagan Ritual and Monotheism', in Stephen Mitchell and Peter van Nuffelen (eds.), *One God: Pagan Monotheism in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
5. MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire*.
6. Walter Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, Carl Newell Jackson Lectures (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987).
7. Jas Elsner and Ian Rutherford (eds.), *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity: Seeing the Gods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
8. H. S. Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion 1: Ter unus: Isis, Dionysos, Hermes; Three Studies in Henotheism*, Studies in Greek and Roman Religion (Leiden: Brill, 1990); John North, 'Pagans, Polytheists and the Pendulum', in William Vernon Harris (ed.), *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*, Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition (Leiden: Brill, 2005).
9. Mitchell and van Nuffelen (eds.), *One God*.
10. Luke 9: 59–62.
11. Paul, Letter to the Galatians, 5: 28.
12. Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983); Keith Hopkins, 'Christian Number and its Implications', *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 6/2 (1998); Judith Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
13. Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*, Divinations: Rereading Late Antique Religion (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
14. Averil Cameron, 'How to Read Heresiology', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 33/3 (2003).
15. Rives, 'The Decree of Decius and the Religion of Empire'.
16. Olivier Hekster, *Commodus: An Emperor at the Crossroads*, Dutch Monographs on Ancient History and Archaeology (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 2002).
17. John Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital: Rome in the Fourth Century*, Oxford Classical Monographs (Oxford: Clarendon Press,

2000).

18. T. D. Barnes, 'Constantine and the Christians of Persia', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 75 (1985).
19. W. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972); Isabella Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews, and Christians in Antioch*, *Greek Culture in the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
20. Michele Renee Salzman, *The Making of a Christian Aristocracy: Social and Religious Change in the Western Roman Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004); Alan Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
21. Glen Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity*, Thomas Spenser Jerome Lectures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

CHAPTER 17

1. Joseph A. Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Norman Yoffee and George L. Cowgill (eds.), *The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations* (Tucson, Ariz.: University of Arizona Press, 1988); Mario Liverani, 'The Fall of the Assyrian Empire: Ancient and Modern Interpretations', in Alcock et al. (eds.), *Empires*; Jared M. Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive* (London: Allen Lane, 2005).
2. Glen Bowersock, 'The Dissolution of the Roman Empire', in Yoffee and Cowgill (eds.), *The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations*.
3. S. J. B. Barnish, 'Transformation and Survival in the Western Senatorial Aristocracy, c. A.D. 400–700', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 56 (1988); Chris Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy: Central Power and Local Society 400–1000* (London: Macmillan, 1981).
4. James J. O'Donnell, *Cassiodorus* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979).
5. Walter Goffart, *Barbarians and Romans, A.D. 418–584: The Techniques of Accommodation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).
6. Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (London: Duckworth, 1985).
7. Michael Maas, *John Lydus and the Roman Past: Antiquarianism and*

Politics in the Age of Justinian (London: Routledge, 1992).

8. John F. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century: The Transformation of a Culture*, rev. edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
9. Cameron, 'The Construction of Court Ritual'.
10. Judith Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1987).
11. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples*.
12. Roger Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
13. Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies*.
14. Gilbert Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
15. Edmund Thomas, *Monumentality and the Roman Empire: Architecture in the Antonine Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
16. Veyne, *Le Pain et le cirque*; Vivian Nutton, 'The Beneficial Ideology', in Garnsey and Whittaker (eds.), *Imperialism in the Ancient World*; Zuiderhoek, *The Politics of Munificence in the Roman Empire*.
17. Bryan Ward-Perkins, *From Classical Antiquity to the Middle Ages: Urban Public Building in Northern and Central Italy AD 300–850*, Oxford Historical Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).
18. John Rich (ed.), *The City in Late Antiquity*, vol. iii, Leicester–Nottingham Studies in Ancient Society (London: Routledge, 1992); Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City*; Kenneth G. Holum, 'The Classical City in the Sixth Century: Survival and Transformation', in Michael Maas (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
19. Clive Foss, *Ephesus after Antiquity: A Late Antique, Byzantine and Turkish City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); S. T. Loseby, 'Marseille: A Late Antique Success Story?', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 82 (1992); Neil Christie and S. T. Loseby (eds.), *Towns in Transition: Urban Evolution in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Aldershot: Scolar, 1996).
20. Michael Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and its Cities* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

21. Claude Lepelley, *Les Cités de l'Afrique romaine au bas-empire*, 2 vols. (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1979–81).
22. Hugh Kennedy, 'From Polis to Madina: Urban Change in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria', *Past and Present*, 106/1 (1985).
23. Millar, 'Empire and City, Augustus to Julian'.
24. Mark Whittow, 'Ruling the Late Roman and Early Byzantine City: A Continuous History', *Past and Present*, 129 (1990).
25. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples*.
26. De Ste Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*.
27. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*.
28. Garth Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

CHAPTER 18

1. Greg Woolf, 'The Uses of Forgetfulness in Roman Gaul', in Hans-Joachim Gehrke and Astrid Möller (eds.), *Vergangenheit und Lebenswelt: Soziale Kommunikation, Traditionsbildung und historisches Bewußtsein*, ScriptOralia (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1996); Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*; Woolf, *Tales of the Barbarians*.
2. Heather, 'Cassiodorus and the Rise of the Amals'; Ian Wood, 'Defining the Franks: Frankish Origins in Early Mediaeval Historiography', in Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson, and Alan V. Murray (eds.), *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages* (Leeds: Leeds University Press, 1995); Andrew Gillett (ed.), *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, Studies in the Early Middle Ages (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002).
3. Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 BC–AD 337* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993); Fergus Millar, 'Ethnic Identity in the Roman Near East, 325–450: Language, Religion and Culture', in Graeme Clarke (ed.), *Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean in Antiquity: Mediterranean Archaeology, Australian and New Zealand Journal for the Archaeology of the Mediterranean World: A Round up of Material and Problems. Not Really an Argumentative Piece* (1998); Stephen Mitchell and Geoffrey Greatrex (eds.), *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity* (London: Duckworth and Classical Press of Wales, 2000).
4. Fergus Millar, 'The Phoenician Cities: A Case Study in

Hellenization', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 29 (1983); Price, 'Local Mythologies in the Greek East'; John Dillery, 'Greek Historians of the Near East: Clio's "Other" Sons', in John Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2007).

5. Bowie, 'The Greeks and their Past in the Second Sophistic'; Swain, *Hellenism and Empire*; Susan E. Alcock, *Archaeologies of the Greek Past: Landscape, Monuments and Memories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Simon Price, 'Memory and Ancient Greece', in Anders Holm Rasmussen and Suzanne William Rasmussen (eds.), *Religion and Society: Rituals, Resources and Identity in the Ancient Graeco-Roman World: The BOMOS Conferences 2002–5* (Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 2008); Christopher P. Jones, 'Ancestry and Identity in the Roman Empire', in Whitmarsh (ed.), *Local Knowledge and Microidentities in the Imperial Greek World*.
6. Hazel Dodge and Bryan Ward-Perkins (eds.), *Marble in Antiquity: Collected Papers of J. B. Ward-Perkins* (London: British School at Rome, 1992).
7. SORCHA CAREY, *Pliny's Catalogue of Culture: Art and Empire in the Natural History*, Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Catharine Edwards, 'Incorporating the Alien: The Art of Conquest', in Edwards and Woolf (eds.), *Rome the Cosmopolis*.
8. Sarah Macready and F. H. Thompson (eds.), *Roman Architecture in the Greek World*, Society of Antiquaries of London Occasional Papers (London: Society of Antiquaries, 1987); Thomas, *Monumentality and the Roman Empire*; Serafina Cuomo, *Technology and Culture in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, ed. Paul Cartledge and Peter Garnsey, Key Themes in Ancient History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
9. Keith Hopkins and Mary Beard, *The Colosseum*, ed. Mary Beard, Wonders of the World (London: Profile Books, 2005); Elke Stein-Hölkeskamp and Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp (eds.), *Erinnerungsorte der Antike: Die römische Welt* (Munich: C. H. Beck Verlag, 2006).
10. Alain Schnapp, *The Discovery of the Past* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997); Claudia Moatti, *In Search of Ancient Rome*, New Horizons (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993); David Karmon, *The Ruin of the Eternal City: Antiquity and Preservation in Renaissance Rome* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
11. Wiseman, *Remus*; Purcell, 'Becoming Historical'.
12. Jean-Claude Golvin, *L'Amphithéâtre romain: Essai sur la*

théorisation de sa forme et de ses fonctions, 2 vols., Publications du Centre Pierre Paris (UA 991) (Paris: De Boccard, 1988).

13. Werner Eck, 'Senatorial Self-Representation: Developments in the Augustan Period', in Millar and Segal (eds.), *Caesar Augustus*.
14. Ramsay MacMullen, 'The Epigraphic Habit in the Roman Empire', *American Journal of Philology*, 103 (1982); Greg Woolf, 'Monumental Writing and the Expansion of Roman Society', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 86 (1996).
15. Habinek, *The Politics of Latin Literature: Writing, Identity and Empire in Ancient Rome*.
16. J. van Sickle, 'The Elogia of the Cornelii Scipiones and the Origins of Epigram at Rome', *American Journal of Philology*, 108 (1987).
17. Greg Woolf, 'The City of Letters', in Catharine Edwards and Greg Woolf (eds.), *Rome the Cosmopolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
18. Antony Spawforth, 'Symbol of Unity? The Persian-Wars Tradition in the Roman Empire', in Simon Hornblower (ed.), *Greek Historiography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); Newby, *Greek Athletics in the Roman World: Victory and Virtue*.
19. Robert A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988); Clarke, *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*.
20. Leighton D. Reynolds and Nigel G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*, 2nd edn., revised and enlarged (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974).

Bibliography

- Aalders, G. J. D. 'Cassius Dio and the Greek World', *Mnemosyne*, 39/3–4 (1986): 282–304.
- Abulafia, David. 'Mediterraneans', in *Rethinking the Mediterranean*, edited by William Vernon Harris, 64–93. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Alcock, Susan E. *Graecia capta: The Landscapes of Roman Greece*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- ed. *The Early Roman Empire in the East*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997.
- *Archaeologies of the Greek Past: Landscape, Monuments and Memories*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- John F. Cherry, and Jas Elsner, eds *Pausanias: Travel and Memory in Roman Greece*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- T. D'Altroy, K. D. Morrison, and C. M. Sinopoli, eds. *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Ando, Clifford. *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000.
- 'A Religion for the Empire', in *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text*, edited by A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik, 321–44. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- 'Interpretatio romana', *Classical Philology*, 100 (2005): 41–51.
- *The Matter of the Gods: Religion and the Roman Empire*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008.
- Asad, Talad. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.
- Aubert, Jean-Jacques. *Business Managers in Ancient Rome: A Social and Economic Study of Institores, 200 B.C. –A.D. 250*, Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition. Leiden: Brill, 1994.
- Aubet, Maria Eugenia. *The Phoenicians and the West: Politics, Colonies and Trade*. 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Austin, Michel. 'Hellenistic Kings, War and the Economy', *Classical Quarterly*, 36/2 (1986): 450–66.
- Badian, Ernst. *Foreign Clientelae (264–70 BC)*. Oxford: Clarendon Press,

1958.

- Bagnall, Roger. *Egypt in Late Antiquity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Balsdon, J. P. V. D. *Romans and Aliens*. London: Duckworth, 1979.
- Bang, Peter Fibiger. *The Roman Bazaar: A Comparative Study of Trade and Markets in a Tributary Empire*, Cambridge Classical Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- and Christopher A. Bayly, eds *Tributary Empires in Global History*, Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies Series. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- ——— *Tributary Empires in History: Comparative Perspectives from Antiquity to the Late Mediaeval*, *The Mediaeval History Journal* 2003.
- Barker, Graeme. *Prehistoric Farming in Europe*, New Directions in Archaeology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- and Tom Rasmussen. *The Etruscans*. Edited by James Campbell and Barry Cunliffe. 2nd edn. *The Peoples of Europe*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 1998.
- Barnes, T. D. *Constantine and Eusebius*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982.
- ‘Constantine and the Christians of Persia’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 75 (1985): 126–36.
- Barnish, S. J. B. ‘Transformation and Survival in the Western Senatorial Aristocracy, c. A.D. 400–700’, *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 56 (1988): 120–55.
- Bartman, E. ‘Sculptural Collecting and Display in the Private Realm’, in *Roman Art in the Private Sphere: New Perspectives on the Architecture and Decor of the Domus, Villa and Insula*, edited by E. Gazda, 71–88. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991.
- Batty, Roger. *Rome and the Nomads: The Pontic-Danubian Realm in Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Beard, Mary. ‘Cicero and Divination: The Formation of a Latin Discourse’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 76 (1986): 33–46.
- ‘A Complex of Times: No More Sheep on Romulus’ Birthday’, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 33 (1987): 1–15.
- ‘The Roman and the Foreign: The Cult of the “Great Mother” in Imperial Rome’, in *Shamanism, History and the State*, edited by Nicholas Thomas and Caroline Humphrey, 164–90. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994.
- *The Roman Triumph*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007.

- and John North, eds *Pagan Priests*. London: Duckworth, 1990.
- — and Simon Price. *Religions of Rome*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- — — *Religions of Rome, i: A History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- and Michael H. Crawford. *Rome in the Late Republic: Problems and Interpretations*. 2nd edn. London: Duckworth, 1999.
- Bedford, Peter R. 'The Neo-Assyrian Empire', in *The Dynamics of Ancient Empires: State Power from Assyria to Byzantium*, edited by Ian Morris and Walter Scheidel, 30–65. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Bickermann, Elias. 'Origines gentium', *Classical Philology*, 47 (1952): 65–81.
- Bietti Sestieri, Anna Maria. *The Iron Age Community of Osteria dell'Osa: A Study of Socio-political Development in Central Tyrrhenian Italy*, New Studies in Archaeology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Birley, Anthony R. *Hadrian: The Restless Emperor*. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Blagg, Tom, and Martin Millett, eds *The Early Roman Empire in the West*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1990.
- Blázquez Martínez, José María, and José Remesal Rodríguez, eds. *Producción y comercio del aceite en la antigüedad; Congreso I*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense, 1980.
- — eds *Producción y comercio del aceite en la antigüedad; Congreso II*. Madrid: Universidad Complutense, 1982.
- Blockley, Roger. *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*. 2 vols. Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1981–3.
- Boardman, John. *Greeks Overseas: Their Early Colonies and Trade*. 4th edn. London: Thames and Hudson, 1999.
- Bodde, Derk. 'The State and Empire of Ch'in', in *The Cambridge History of China, i: The Ch'in and Han Empires, 221 B.C. –A.D. 220*, edited by Denis Twitchett and Michael Loewe, 21–102. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Bowen, Anthony, and Peter Garnsey. *Lactantius' Divine Institutes*, vol. xl, Translated Texts for Historians. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003.
- Bowerstock, Glen. 'The Mechanics of Subversion in the Roman Provinces', in *Oppositions et résistances à l'empire d'Auguste à Trajan*, edited by Adalberto Giovannini, 291–320. Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 1987.
- 'The Dissolution of the Roman Empire', in *The Collapse of Ancient*

- States and Civilizations*, edited by Norman Yoffee and George L. Cowgill, 165–75. Tucson, Ariz.: University of Arizona Press, 1988.
- *Hellenism in Late Antiquity*, Thomas Spenser Jerome Lectures. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Peter Brown, and Oleg Grabar, eds. *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Bowie, Ewan. ‘The Greeks and their Past in the Second Sophistic’, *Past and Present*, 46 (1970): 3–48.
- Bowman, Alan. *Life and Letters on the Roman Frontier: Vindolanda and its People*. London: British Museum Press, 1994.
- and Andrew Wilson, eds. *Quantifying the Roman Economy: Methods and Problems*, Oxford Studies on the Roman Economy. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Boyarin, Daniel. *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*. Edited by Daniel Boyarin, Virginia Burrus, Charlotte Fonrobert, and Robert Gregg, *Divinations: Rereading Late Antique Religion*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- Bradley, Guy, Elena Isayev, and Corinna Riva, eds *Ancient Italy: Regions without Boundaries*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2007.
- Bradley, Keith. *Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire: A Study in Social Control*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- *Slavery and Society at Rome*. Edited by Paul Cartledge and Peter Garnsey, *Key Themes in Ancient History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- ‘Slavery in the Roman Republic’, in *Cambridge World History of Slavery*, i: *The Ancient Mediterranean World*, edited by Keith Bradley and Paul Cartledge, 241–64. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- and Paul Cartledge, eds *Cambridge World History of Slavery*, i: *The Ancient Mediterranean World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Braund, David. *Rome and the Friendly King: The Character of the Client Kingship*. London: Croom Helm, 1982.
- ‘Royal Wills and Rome’, *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 51 (1983): 16–57.
- Brisch, Nicole, ed. *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and beyond*, Oriental Institute Seminars. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2008.
- Broadhead, William. ‘Migration and Transformation in Northern Italy in the 3rd–1st centuries BC’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 44 (2000): 145–66.
- Brosius, Maria. ‘New out of Old? Court and Court Ceremonies in

- Achaemenid Persia', in *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies*, edited by Antony Spawforth, 17–57. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Brown, Peter. *The World of Late Antiquity: From Marcus Aurelius to Muhammad*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1971.
- *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, Lectures on the History of Religions. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.
- *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. London: Faber, 2000.
- Brumfiel, Elizabeth M., and John W. Fox, eds. *Factional Competition and Political Development in the New World*, New Directions in Archaeology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Brunt, P. A. 'Italian Aims at the Time of the Social War', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 55 (1965): 90–109.
- *Italian Manpower 225 B.C. –A.D. 14*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- 'Laus imperii', in *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, edited by Peter Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker, 159–91. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978. Reprint in P. A. Brunt, *Roman Imperial Themes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, 288–323.
- 'The Revenues of Rome', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 71 (1981): 161–72.
- *The Fall of the Roman Republic, and Related Essays*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.
- 'Publicans in the Principate', in *Roman Imperial Themes*, 354–432. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
- Bruun, Christer. 'The Antonine Plague and the "Third-Century Crisis"', in *Crises and the Roman Empire*, edited by Olivier Hekster, Gerda de Kleijn, and Daniëlle Slootjes, 201–17. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- Burkert, Walter. *Ancient Mystery Cults*, Carl Newell Jackson Lectures. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987.
- Cameron, Alan. *Greek Mythography in the Roman World*, edited by Donald J. Mastronarde, American Philological Association: American Classical Studies. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- *The Last Pagans of Rome*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Cameron, Averil, ed. *Changing Cultures in Early Byzantium*. Aldershot: Variorum Reprints, 1996.
- *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse*, Sather Classical Lectures. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991.
- 'The Construction of Court Ritual: The Byzantine Book of

- Ceremonies', in *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, edited by David Cannadine and Simon Price, 106–36. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- ed. *Continuity and Change in Sixth-Century Byzantium*. London: Variorum Reprints, 1981.
- *Procopius and the Sixth Century*. London: Duckworth, 1985.
- 'How to Read Heresiology', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 33/3 (2003): 471–92.
- and Stuart G. Hall. *Eusebius' Life of Constantine: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999.
- Campbell, Brian. *The Emperor and the Roman Army 31 BC–AD 235*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984.
- 'War and Diplomacy: Rome and Parthia 31 BC–AD 235', in *War and Society in the Roman World*, edited by John Rich and Graham Shipley, 213–40. London: Routledge, 1993.
- Canepa, Matthew P. *The Two Eyes of the Earth: Art and Ritual of Kingship between Rome and Sasanian Iran*, edited by Peter Brown. Vol. xlv, *The Transformation of the Classical Heritage*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009.
- Cannadine, David. *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw their Empire*. London: Allen Lane, 2001.
- and Simon Price, eds. *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Carey, Sorcha. *Pliny's Catalogue of Culture: Art and Empire in the Natural History*, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Carlsen, Jesper, and Elio Lo Cascio, eds. *Agricoltura e scambi nell'Italia tardo-Repubblicana*, *Pragmateiai*. Bari: Edipuglia, 2009.
- Cébeillac-Gervason, M., ed. *Les Bourgeoisies municipales italiennes aux IIe et Ier siècles av. J-C*. Naples: Éditions du CNRS & Bibliothèque de l'Institut Français de Naples, 1981.
- Champion, T. C. 'Mass Migration in Later Prehistoric Europe', in *Transport Technology and Social Change: Papers Delivered at Tekniska Museet Symposium No. 2, Stockholm, 1979*, edited by Per Sörbom, 33–42. Stockholm: Tekniska Museet, 1980.
- Champion, Tim, Clive Gamble, Stephen Shennan, and Alasdair Whittle. *Prehistoric Europe*. London: Academic Press, 1984.
- Christie, Neil, and S. T. Loseby, eds. *Towns in Transition: Urban Evolution in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. Aldershot: Scholar, 1996.
- Claridge, Amanda. *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide*. 2nd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

- Clarke, Graeme, ed. *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*. Rushcutters Bay, NSW: Australian National University Press, 1990.
- Clarke, Katherine. 'Universal Perspectives in Historiography', in *The Limits of Historiography: Genre and Narrative in Ancient Historical Texts*, edited by Christina Shuttleworth Kraus, 249–79. Leiden: Brill, 1999.
- Coarelli, Filippo. 'Public Building in Rome between the Second Punic War and Sulla', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 45 (1977): 1–23.
- *Rome and Environs: An Archaeological Guide*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007.
- and Helen Patterson, eds. *Mercator placidissimus: The Tiber Valley in Antiquity: New Research in the Upper and Middle River Valley, Rome, 27–28 February 2004*, Quaderni di Eutopia. Rome: Quasar, 2008.
- Colinvaux, Paul A. *Why Big Fierce Animals Are Rare: An Ecologist's Perspective*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.
- Collis, John R. *The European Iron Age*. London: Batsford, 1984.
- Conrad, Geoffrey, and Arthur A. Demarest. *Religion and Empire: The Dynamics of Aztec and Inca Expansionism*, New Directions in Archaeology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Cooley, Alison. 'Beyond Rome and Latium: Roman Religion in the Age of Augustus', in *Religion in Republican Italy*, edited by Celia Schultz and Paul B. Harvey, 228–52. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- *Res gestae divi Augusti: Text, Translation and Commentary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Corcoran, Simon. *Empire of the Tetrarchs: Imperial Pronouncements and Government, AD 284–324*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
- Cornell, Tim. *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000–264 BC)*, Routledge History of the Ancient World. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Cottier, Michel, Michael H. Crawford, C. V. Crowther, Jean-Louis Ferrary, Barbara Levick, and Michael Wörrle, eds. *The Customs Law of Asia*, edited by Alan Bowman and Alison Cooley, Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Coulston, J. C. N., and Hazel Dodge, eds. *Ancient Rome: The Archaeology of the Eternal City*, Oxford University School of Archaeology Monographs. Oxford: Oxford University School of Archaeology, 2000.
- Courtois, Christian. *Les Vandales et l'Afrique*. Paris: Arts et Métiers Graphiques, 1955.
- Crawford, Michael H. 'Rome and the Greek World: Economic

- Relationships', *Economic History Review*, 30/1 (1977): 45–52.
- 'Greek Intellectuals and the Roman Aristocracy in the First Century BC', in *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, edited by Peter Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker, 193–207. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic: Italy and the Mediterranean Economy*. London: Methuen, 1985.
- *The Roman Republic*. 2nd edn. London: Fontana Press, 1992.
- ed. *Roman Statutes*. 2 vols, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Supplements. London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1996.
- Cristofani, Mauro, ed. *La grande Roma dei Tarquini: Roma, Palazzo delle esposizioni, 12 giugno–30 settembre 1990: Catalogo della mostra*. Rome: 'L'Erma' di Bretschneider, 1990.
- Crone, Patricia. *Pre-industrial Societies, New Perspectives on the Past*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
- Crook, J. A. *Consilium principis: Imperial Councils and Counsellors from Augustus to Diocletian*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955.
- Crosby, Alfred W. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900*, Studies in Environment and History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Cunliffe, Barry. *Greeks, Romans and Barbarians: Spheres of Interaction*. London: Batsford, 1988.
- *Europe Between the Oceans: Themes and Variations, 9000 BC–AD 1000*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.
- Cuomo, Serafina. *Technology and Culture in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, edited by Paul Cartledge and Peter Garnsey, Key Themes in Ancient History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Curran, John. *Pagan City and Christian Capital: Rome in the Fourth Century*, Oxford Classical Monographs. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000.
- Dagron, Gilbert. *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- D'Arms, John H. *The Romans on the Bay of Naples: A Social and Cultural History of the Villas and their Owners from 150 B.C. to A.D. 100*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- David, Jean-Michel. *The Roman Conquest of Italy*, edited by Tim Cornell, The Ancient World. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996.
- de Callatay, François. 'The Graeco-Roman Economy in the Super Long Run: Lead, Copper, and Shipwrecks', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 18/1 (2005): 361–72.
- de Ligt, Luuk, and Simon Northwood, eds. *People, Land and Politics: Demographic Developments and the Transformation of Roman Italy*

- 300 BC–AD 14, Mnemosyne Supplements. Leiden: Brill, 2008.
- Demougin, Ségolène, Hubert Devijver, and Marie-Thérèse Raepsaet-Charlier, eds. *L'Ordre équestre: Histoire d'une aristocratie (IIe siècle av. J.-C.–IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.)*, Collection de l'École Française de Rome. Rome: École Française de Rome, 1999.
- Dench, Emma. *From Barbarians to New Men: Greek, Roman and Modern Perceptions of Peoples of the Central Apennines*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- *Romulus' Asylum: Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Derks, Ton, and N. Roymans, eds. *Ethnic Constructs in Antiquity: The Role of Power and Tradition*, Amsterdam Archaeological Studies. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009.
- de Ste Croix, G. E. M. *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World: From the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquests*. London: Duckworth, 1981.
- de Souza, Philip. *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Diamond, Jared M. *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive*. London: Allen Lane, 2005.
- Dillery, John. 'Greek Historians of the Near East. Clio's "Other" Sons', in *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, edited by John Marincola, 221–30. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2007.
- Dix, T. Keith. 'The Library of Lucullus', *Athenaeum*, 88/2 (2000): 441–64.
- Dodge, Hazel, and Bryan Ward-Perkins, eds. *Marble in Antiquity: Collected Papers of J. B. Ward-Perkins*. London: British School at Rome, 1992.
- Dougherty, Carol. *The Poetics of Colonization: From City to Text in Archaic Greece*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Drinkwater, John. *The Alamanni and Rome 213–496 (Caracalla to Clovis)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- and Hugh Elton, eds. *Fifth Century Gaul: A Crisis of Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Duindam, Jeroen. *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern European Court*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1994.
- Dunbabin, Katherine M. *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Duncan-Jones, R. P. 'Taxes, Trade and Money', in *Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy*, 30–47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- 'The Impact of the Antonine Plague', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 9 (1996): 108–36.

- Dyson, Stephen L. *The Creation of the Roman Frontier*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.
- Earl, Donald. *The Moral and Political Tradition in Rome*, Aspects of Greek and Roman Life. London: Thames and Hudson, 1967.
- Eck, Werner. 'Senatorial Self-Representation: Developments in the Augustan Period', in *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects*, edited by Fergus Millar and Erich Segal, 129–67. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Eckart, Hella, ed. *Roman Diasporas: Archaeological Approaches to Mobility and Diversity in the Roman Empire*, Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplements. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2010.
- Eckstein, Arthur M. *Senate and General: Individual Decision Making and Roman Foreign Relations, 264–194 B.C.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987.
- *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War and the Rise of Rome*, Hellenistic Culture and Society. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006.
- Edwards, Catherine. *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- ed. *Roman Presences: Receptions of Rome in European Culture, 1789–1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- 'Incorporating the Alien: The Art of Conquest', in *Rome the Cosmopolis*, edited by Catharine Edwards and Greg Woolf, 44–70. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- and Greg Woolf, eds. *Rome the Cosmopolis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Eilers, Claude. *Roman Patrons of Greek Cities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Eisenstadt, Shmuel. *The Political Systems of Empires*. London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963.
- Elias, Norbert. *The Court Society*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1983.
- Elsner, Jas. *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph: The Art of the Roman Empire, AD 100–450*, Oxford History of Art. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- and Ian Rutherford, eds. *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity: Seeing the Gods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Elton, Hugh. *Warfare in Roman Europe, AD 350–425*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
- Elvin, Mark. *The Pattern of the Chinese Past: A Social and Economic*

- Explanation*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1973.
- Erdkamp, Paul. *The Grain Market in the Roman Empire: A Social, Political and Economic Study*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Erskine, Andrew. *The Hellenistic Stoa: Political Thought and Action*. London: Duckworth, 1990.
- *Troy between Greece and Rome: Local Tradition and Imperial Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Fantham, Elaine. *Roman Literary Culture from Cicero to Apuleius*, Ancient Society and History. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Feeney, Denis. *Caesar's Calendar: Ancient Time and the Beginnings of History*, Sather Classical Lectures. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007.
- Feeney, Denis. *Literature and Religion at Rome: Culture, Contexts and Beliefs*, Latin Literature in Context. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Fentress, James, and Chris Wickham. *Social Memory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992.
- Ferrary, Jean-Louis. *Philhellénisme et impérialisme: Aspects idéologiques de la conquête romaine du monde hellénistique, de la Seconde Guerre de Macédoine à la Guerre contre Mithridate*, Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome. Rome: École Française de Rome, 1988.
- Flaig, Egon. *Den Kaiser herausfordern: Die Usurpation im römischen Reich*. Frankfurt-am-Main: Campus Verlag, 1992.
- Flower, Harriet. *Ancestor Masks and Aristocratic Power in Roman Culture*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
- *The Art of Forgetting: Disgrace and Oblivion in Roman Political Culture*, edited by Robin Osborne, Peter Rhodes, and Richard J. A. Talbert, Studies in the History of Greece and Rome. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.
- Foss, Clive. *Ephesus after Antiquity: A Late Antique, Byzantine and Turkish City*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.
- Fowden, Garth. *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- France, Jérôme. *Quadragesima Galliarum: L'organisation douanière des provinces alpestres, gauloises et germaniques de l'Empire romain, 1er siècle avant J.-C.–3er siècle après J.-C.*, Collections de l'École Française à Rome. Rome: École Française de Rome, 2001.
- Frederiksen, M. *Campania*. London: British School at Rome, 1984.
- Fulford, Michael G. 'Roman and Barbarian: The Economy of Roman Frontier Systems', in *Barbarians and Romans in North-West Europe*

- from the Later Republic to Late Antiquity, edited by J. C. Barrett, 81–95. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1989.
- Gabba, Emilio. *Republican Rome, the Army and the Allies*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1976.
- Galinsky, Karl. *Augustan Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- ed. *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Garnsey, Peter. *Famine and Food Supply in the Greco-Roman World: Responses to Risk and Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity*, Key Themes in Ancient History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- ‘Roman Citizenship and Roman Law in Late Antiquity’, in *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire*, edited by Simon Swain and Mark Edwards, 133–55. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- and Richard P. Saller. *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture*. London: Duckworth, 1987.
- and Caroline Humfress. *The Evolution of the Late Antique World*. Cambridge: Orchard Academic, 2001.
- Geertz, Clifford. ‘Centers, Kings and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power’, in *Culture and its Creators: Essays in Honor of Edward Shils*, edited by Joseph Ben-David and Terry Nichols Clarke, 150–71. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977. Reprint, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. New York: Basic Books, 1983, 121–46.
- Gehrke, Hans-Joachim. ‘Heroen als Grenzgänger zwischen Griechen und Barbaren’, in *Cultural Borrowings and Ethnic Appropriations in Antiquity*, edited by Erich Gruen, 50–67. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005.
- Giardina, Andrea, and Aldo Schiavone, eds. *Società romana e produzione schiavistica*. Rome: Laterza, 1981.
- Gigante, Marcello. *Philodemus in Italy: The Books from Herculaneum*, translated by Dirk Obbink, The Body, in Theory: Histories of Cultural Materialism. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995.
- Gildenhard, Ingo. *Paideia Romana: Cicero’s Tusculan Disputations*, edited by Tim Whitmarsh and James Warren, Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society Supplements. Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 2007.
- Gillett, Andrew, ed. *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, Studies in the Early Middle Ages.

- Turnhout: Brepols, 2002.
- Goffart, Walter. *Barbarians and Romans, A.D. 418–584: The Techniques of Accommodation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.
- Goldhill, Simon, ed. *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Goldsworthy, Adrian. *The Roman Army at War, 100 B.C.–A.D. 200*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
- *Caesar: The Life of a Colossus*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2006.
- and Ian Haynes, eds. *The Roman Army as a Community*, Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplements. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1999.
- Golvin, Jean-Claude. *L'Amphithéâtre romain: Essai sur la théorisation de sa forme et de ses fonctions*. 2 vols., Publications du Centre Pierre Paris (UA 991). Paris: De Boccard, 1988.
- Gonzáles, Julián. 'Lex Irnitana: A New Copy of the Flavian Municipal Law', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 76 (1986): 147–243.
- Gordon, Richard. 'Religion in the Roman Empire: The Civic Compromise and its Limits', in *Pagan Priests*, edited by Mary Beard and John North, 233–55. London: Duckworth, 1990.
- Gowers, Emily. *The Loaded Table: Representations of Food in Roman Literature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.
- Gowing, Alain M. *Empire and Memory: The Representation of the Roman Republic in Imperial Culture*, edited by Denis Feeney and Stephen Hinds, Roman Literature and its Contexts. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Gradel, Ittai. *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, Oxford Classical Monographs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Greene, Kevin. *The Archaeology of the Roman Economy*. London: Batsford, 1986.
- Griffin, Miriam. 'Claudius in Tacitus', *Classical Quarterly*, 40/2 (1990): 482–501.
- *Nero: The End of a Dynasty*. 2nd edn. London: Batsford, 1996.
- Gruen, Erich, ed. *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974.
- *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*. 2 vols. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984.
- *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome*. London: Duckworth, 1992.
- 'The Expansion of the Empire under Augustus', in *Cambridge Ancient History*, x: *The Augustan Empire 43 B.C.–A.D. 69*, edited by Alan Bowman, Edward Champlin, and Andrew Lintott, 147–97.

- Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- *Diaspora: Jews among Greeks and Romans*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002.
- ed. *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, Issues and Debates. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2011.
- Gutas, Dimitri. *Greek Thought, Arab Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early Abbasid Society (2nd–4th/8th–10th Centuries)*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Guthrie, Stewart E. ‘Anthropological Theories of Religion’, in *Cambridge Companion to Atheism*, edited by Michael Martin, 283–99. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Habinek, Thomas, ed. *The Politics of Latin Literature: Writing, Identity and Empire in Ancient Rome*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- *The World of Roman Song from Ritualised Speech to Social Order*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.
- Haldon, John F. *Byzantium in the Seventh Century: The Transformation of a Culture*. Rev. edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Halfmann, Helmut. *Itinera principum: Geschichte und Typologie der Kaiserreisen im Römischen Reich*, Heidelberger althistorische Beiträge und epigraphische Studien. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1986.
- Hall, John A. *Powers and Liberties: The Causes and Consequences of the Rise of the West*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1985.
- Halstead, Paul, and John O’Shea, eds. *Bad Year Economics: Cultural Responses to Risk and Uncertainty*, New Directions in Archaeology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Hardie, Philip. *Virgil’s Aeneid: Cosmos and Imperium*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985.
- Harries, Jill. *Sidonius Apollinaris and the Fall of Rome, AD 407–485*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.
- and Ian Wood, eds. *The Theodosian Code: Studies in the Imperial Law of Late Antiquity*. London: Duckworth, 1993.
- Harris, William Vernon. *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327–70 B.C.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.
- ‘Roman Expansion in the West’, in *Cambridge Ancient History*, viii: *Rome and the Mediterranean to 133 BC*, edited by A. E. Astin, F. Walbank, M. Frederiksen, and R. M. Ogilvie, 107–62. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- ‘Demography, Geography and the Sources of Roman Slaves’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 89 (1999): 62–75.
- ed. *The Transformations of Urbs Roma in Late Antiquity*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplements*. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of

- Roman Archaeology, 1999.
- ed. *Rethinking the Mediterranean*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- ed. *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- *The Roman Imperial Economy: Twelve Essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Hassall, Mark, Michael H. Crawford, and Joyce Reynolds. 'Rome and the Eastern Provinces at the End of the Second Century BC', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 64 (1974): 195–220.
- Heather, Peter. 'Cassiodorus and the Rise of the Amals: Genealogy and the Goths under Hun Domination', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 79 (1989): 103–28.
- *Goths and Romans 332–489*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Hedeager, L. 'Empire, Frontier and the Barbarian Hinterland: Rome and Northern Europe from A.D. 1–400', in *Centre and Periphery in the Ancient World*, edited by Michael Rowlands, Mogens Trolle Larsen, and Kristian Kristiansen, 125–40. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Hekster, Olivier. *Commodus: An Emperor at the Crossroads*, Dutch Monographs on Ancient History and Archaeology. Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 2002.
- Gerda de Kleijn, and Daniëlle Slootjes, eds. *Crises and the Roman Empire*, Impact of Empire. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- Herrin, Judith. *The Formation of Christendom*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1987.
- Heurgon, Jacques. *The Rise of Rome to 264 BC*. London: Batsford, 1973.
- Hinds, Stephen. *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry*, Latin Literature in Context. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Hine, Harry. 'Seismology and Vulcanology in Antiquity?', in *Science and Mathematics in Ancient Greek Culture*, edited by C. J. Tuplin and T. E. Rihll, 56–75. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Hingley, Richard, ed. *Images of Rome: Perceptions of Ancient Rome in Europe and the United States in the Modern Age*, edited by J. H. Humphrey, *Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplements*. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2001.
- *Globalizing Roman Culture: Unity, Diversity and Empire*. London: Routledge, 2005.
- Hitchner, R. Bruce. 'Globalization avant la lettre: Globalization and the History of the Roman Empire', *New Global Studies*, 2/2 (2008).
- Hölkeskamp, Karl-Joachim. 'Conquest, Competition and Consensus: Roman Expansion in Italy and the Rise of the "Nobilitas"', *Historia*:

- Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 42/1 (1993): 12–39.
- Holum, Kenneth G. ‘The Classical City in the Sixth Century: Survival and Transformation’, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, edited by Michael Maas, 87–112. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Hopkins, Keith. *Conquerors and Slaves: Sociological Studies in Roman History I*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- ‘Divine Emperors, or the Symbolic Unity of the Roman Empire’, in *Conquerors and Slaves: Sociological Studies in Roman History I*, 197–242. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- ‘Economic Growth and Towns in Classical Antiquity’, in *Towns in Societies: Essays in Economic History and Historical Sociology*, edited by Philip Abrams and E. A. Wrigley, 35–77. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- ‘Taxes and Trade in the Roman Empire, 200 BC–ad 200’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 70 (1980): 101–25.
- *Death and Renewal: Sociological Studies in Roman History II*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- ‘Rome, Taxes, Rents and Trade’, *Kodai*, 6–7 (1995–6): 41–75.
- ‘Christian Number and its Implications’, *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 6/2 (1998): 185–226.
- ‘The Political Economy of the Roman Empire’, in *The Dynamics of Ancient Empires: State Power from Assyria to Byzantium*, edited by Ian Morris and Walter Scheidel, 178–204. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- and Mary Beard. *The Colosseum*, edited by Mary Beard, Wonders of the World. London: Profile Books, 2005.
- Horden, Peregrine, and Nicholas Purcell. *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000.
- Howgego, Christopher. *Ancient History from Coins*. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Isaac, Benjamin. *The Limits of Empire: The Roman Army in the East*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
- *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Janes, Dominic. *God and Gold in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Johnston, David. *Roman Law in Context*, edited by Paul Cartledge and Peter Garnsey, Key Themes in Ancient History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Jones, A. H. M. *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602*. 2 vols. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1964.
- Jones, Christopher P. ‘A Syrian at Lyon’, *American Journal of Philology*,

- ‘Ancestry and Identity in the Roman Empire’, in *Local Knowledge and Microidentities in the Imperial Greek World*, edited by Tim Whitmarsh, 111–24. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Jones, R. F. J. ‘A False Start? The Roman Urbanisation of Western Europe’, *World Archaeology*, 19/1 (1987): 47–58.
- Karmon, David. *The Ruin of the Eternal City: Antiquity and Preservation in Renaissance Rome*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Kaster, Robert A. *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988.
- Kautsky, J. H. *The Politics of Aristocratic Empires*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1982.
- Keaveney, Arthur. *Sulla: The Last Republican*. 2nd edn. London: Routledge, 2005.
- Kehoe, Dennis P. ‘The Early Roman Empire: Production’, in *Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*, edited by Walter Scheidel, Ian Morris, and Richard P. Saller, 543–69. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Kelly, Christopher. *Ruling the Later Roman Empire*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004.
- *Attila the Hun: Barbarian Terror and the Fall of the Roman Empire*. London: The Bodley Head, 2008.
- Kelly, Gavin. *Ammianus Marcellinus: The Allusive Historian*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Kennedy, Hugh. ‘From Polis to Madina: Urban Change in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria’, *Past and Present*, 106/1 (1985): 3–27.
- Kidd, I. G. ‘Posidonius as Philosopher-Historian’, in *Philosophia togata I: Essays on Philosophy and Roman Society*, edited by Miriam Griffin and Jonathon Barnes, 38–50. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- King, Anthony C. ‘Diet in the Roman World: A Regional Inter-Site Comparison of the Mammal Bones’, *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 12/1 (1999): 168–202.
- Kleiner, Diana E. E., and Susan B. Matheson, eds. *I Claudia: Women in Ancient Rome*. Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1996.
- eds. *I Claudia II: Women in Roman Art and Society*. Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2000.
- König, Jason. *Athletics and Literature in the Roman Empire*, edited by Susan E. Alcock, Jas Elsner, and Simon Goldhill, Greek Culture in the Roman World. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- ‘Sympotic Dialogue in the First to Fifth Centuries ce’, in *The End*

of *Dialogue in Antiquity*, edited by Simon Goldhill, 85–113.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Krebs, Christopher B. 'Borealism: Caesar, Seneca, Tacitus and the Roman Discourse about the Germanic North', in *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, edited by Erich Gruen, 202–21. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2011.

Kuhrt, Amélie. 'Usurpation, Conquest and Ceremonial: From Babylon to Persia', in *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, edited by David Cannadine and Simon Price, 20–55. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Kulikowski, Michael. *Late Roman Spain and its Cities*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

Kulikowski, Michael. *Rome's Gothic Wars from the Third Century to Alaric*, Key Conflicts of Classical Antiquity. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Kunow, Jürgen. *Der römische Import in der Germania libera bis zu den Markomannenkrieg: Studien zu Bronze- und Glasgefäßen*, Göttinger Schriften zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte. Neumunster: K. Wachholtz, 1983.

Lane Fox, Robin. *Pagans and Christians in the Mediterranean World from the Second Century A.D. to the Conversion of Constantine*. Harmondsworth: Viking, 1986.

Langlands, Rebecca. *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Lattimore, Owen. *Inner Asian Frontier of China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940.

Leach, Eleanor Windsor. *The Social Life of Painting in Ancient Rome and on the Bay of Naples*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Lenin, V. I. *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism: A Popular Outline*. Moscow: Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR, 1934.

Lepelley, Claude. *Les Cités de l'Afrique romaine au bas-empire*. 2 vols. Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1979–81.

Levene, D. S. 'Sallust's Jugurtha: An "Historical Fragment"', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 82 (1992): 53–70.

Levick, Barbara. *Tiberius the Politician*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1976.

—— 'Morals, Politics and the Fall of the Roman Republic', *Greece & Rome*, 29 (1982): 53–62.

—— 'Popular in the Provinces? À Propos of Tacitus *Annales* 1.2.2', *Acta classica*, 37 (1994): 49–65.

—— *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City*. Oxford: Oxford University

- Press, 2001.
- Liebeschuetz, W. *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.
- Lieu, Judith. *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Ling, Roger. *Roman Painting*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Lintott, Andrew. 'Imperial Expansion and Moral Decline in the Roman Republic', *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 21 (1972): 626–38.
- *Judicial Reform and Land Reform in the Roman Republic: A New Edition, with Translation and Commentary, of the Laws from Urbino*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- J. A. Crook, and Elizabeth Rawson, eds. *Cambridge Ancient History*, ix: *The Last Age of the Roman Republic 146–43 BC*. 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Liverani, Mario. 'The Fall of the Assyrian Empire: Ancient and Modern Interpretations', in *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History*, edited by Susan E. Alcock, T. D'Altroy, K. D. Morrison, and C. M. Sinopoli, 374–91. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Loseby, S. T. 'Marseille: A Late Antique Success Story?', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 82 (1992): 165–85.
- Lowenthal, David. *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Luttwak, Edward N. *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire: From the First Century AD to the Third*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976.
- Maas, Michael, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- . *John Lydus and the Roman Past: Antiquarianism and Politics in the Age of Justinian*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- MacCormack, Sabine. *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity, Transformation of the Classical Heritage*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981.
- McCormick, Michael. *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the Early Medieval West*, Past and Present Publications. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- MacMullen, Ramsay. *Soldier and Civilian in the Later Roman Empire*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963.
- . *Paganism in the Roman Empire*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.
- . 'The Epigraphic Habit in the Roman Empire', *American Journal of*

- Philology*, 103 (1982): 233–46.
- *Christianizing the Roman Empire (A.D. 100–400)*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.
- *Corruption and the Decline of Rome*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.
- McNeill, William H. *Plagues and Peoples*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1976.
- Macready, Sarah, and F. H. Thompson, eds. *Roman Architecture in the Greek World*, Society of Antiquaries of London Occasional Papers. London: Society of Antiquaries, 1987.
- Malamud, Margaret. *Ancient Rome and Modern America*, Classical Receptions. Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
- Manning, J. G. ‘Coinage as Code in Ptolemaic Egypt’, in *The Monetary Systems of the Greeks and Romans*, edited by William Vernon Harris, 84–111. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Masuzawa, Tomoko. *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005.
- Matthews, John F. ‘Hostages, Philosophers, Pilgrims, and the Diffusion of Ideas in the Late Roman Mediterranean and Near East’, in *Tradition and Innovation in Late Antiquity*, edited by F. M. Clover and R. S. Humphreys, 29–49. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.
- *Laying down the Law: A Study of the Theodosian Code*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Matthews, John F. *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court, A.D. 364–425*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
- *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*. London: Duckworth, 1989.
- Mattingly, David, ed. ‘First Fruit? The Olive in the Roman World’, in *Human Landscapes in Classical Antiquity: Environment and Culture*, edited by Graham Shipley and John Salmon, 213–53. London: Routledge, 1996.
- *Dialogues in Roman Imperialism: Power, Discourse and Discrepant Experience in the Roman Empire*, edited by J. H. Humphrey, Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplements. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1997.
- *An Imperial Possession: Britain in the Roman Empire 54 BC–AD 409*. London: Allen Lane, 2006.
- *Imperialism, Power and Identity: Experiencing the Roman Empire*, Miriam S. Balmuth Lectures in Ancient History and Archaeology. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- and John Salmon, eds. *Economies beyond Agriculture in the Classical World*, Leicester–Nottingham Studies in Ancient Society. London:

Routledge, 2001.

- Meeks, Wayne A. *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.
- Millar, Fergus. *A Study of Cassius Dio*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964.
- *The Emperor in the Roman World*. London: Duckworth, 1977.
- ‘Emperors, Frontiers and Foreign Relations, 31 BC to AD 378’, *Britannia*, 13 (1982): 1–23.
- ‘Empire and City, Augustus to Julian: Obligations, Excuses and Statuses’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 73 (1983): 76–96.
- ‘The Phoenician Cities: A Case Study in Hellenization’, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 29 (1983): 54–71.
- ‘The Political Character of the Classical Roman Republic, 200–151 B.C.’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 74 (1984): 1–19.
- ‘Politics, Persuasion and the People before the Social War (150–90 B.C.)’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 76 (1986): 1–11.
- *The Roman Near East, 31 BC– AD 337*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- ‘Ethnic Identity in the Roman Near East, 325–450: Language, Religion and Culture’, in *Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean in Antiquity: Mediterranean Archaeology, Australian and New Zealand Journal for the Archaeology of the Mediterranean World*, edited by Graeme Clarke (1998), 159–76.
- *Rome, the Greek World and the East*, i: *The Roman Republic and the Augustan Revolution*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
- *A Greek Roman Empire: Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408–450)*, Sather Classical Lectures. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006.
- and Erich Segal, eds. *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Millett, Martin. *The Romanization of Britain: An Archaeological Essay*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Mitchell, Stephen. *Anatolia: Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor*, i: *The Celts and the Impact of Roman Rule*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- and Geoffrey Greatrex, eds. *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity*. London: Duckworth & Classical Press of Wales, 2000.
- and Peter van Nuffelen, eds. *One God: Pagan Monotheism in the Roman Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Mithen, Steven, and Pascal Boyer. ‘Anthropomorphism and the Evolution of Cognition’, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 2/4 (1996): 717–21.
- Moatti, Claudia. *In Search of Ancient Rome*, New Horizons. London:

- Thames and Hudson, 1993.
- ed. *La Mobilité des personnes en Méditerranée de l'antiquité à l'époque moderne: Procédures de contrôle et documents d'identification*, Collection de l'École Française de Rome. Rome: École Française de Rome, 2004.
- and Wolfgang Kaiser, eds. *Gens de passage en Méditerranée de l'Antiquité à l'époque moderne: Procédures de contrôle et d'identification*, Collection L'Atelier méditerranéen. Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2007.
- Morel, Jean-Paul. 'The Transformation of Italy 300–133 BC', in *Cambridge Ancient History*, viii: *Rome and the Mediterranean to 133 B.C.*, edited by A. E. Astin, F. W. Walbank, M. W. Frederiksen, and R. M. Ogilvie, 477–516. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Moreland, John. 'The Carolingian Empire: Rome Reborn?', in *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History*, edited by Susan E. Alcock, T. D'Altroy, K. D. Morrison, and C. M. Sinopoli, 392–418. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Morley, Neville. *Metropolis and Hinterland: The City of Rome and the Italian Economy 200 B.C.–A.D. 200*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Morris, Ian, and Walter Scheidel, eds. *The Dynamics of Early Empires: State Power from Assyria to Byzantium*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Morstein Kallet-Marx, Robert. *From Hegemony to Empire: The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 BC to 62 BC*, edited by Anthony W. Bulloch, Erich Gruen, A. A. Long, and Andrew Stewart, vol. xv, Hellenistic Culture and Society. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995.
- Mouritsen, Henrik. *Italian Unification: A Study in Ancient and Modern Historiography*, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Supplements. London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1998.
- Murray, Oswyn, and Manuela Tecusan, eds. *In vino veritas*. London: British School at Rome, 1995.
- Newby, Zahra. *Greek Athletics in the Roman World: Victory and Virtue*, edited by Simon Price, R. R. R. Smith, and Oliver Taplin, Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Nicolet, Claude. ed. *Rome et la conquête du monde méditerranéen: 264–27 avant J.C.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1977.
- 'Augustus, Government and the Propertied Classes', in *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects*, edited by Fergus Millar and Erich Segal, 169–88. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

- *Space, Geography and Politics in the Early Roman Empire*, translated by Hélène Leclerc, Jerome Lectures. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991.
- Nielsen, I. *Thermae et Balnea: The Architecture and Cultural History of Roman Baths*. 2 vols. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1990.
- Nock, Arthur Darby. *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933.
- North, John. 'Democratic Politics in Republican Rome', *Past and Present*, 126 (1990): 3–21.
- 'The Development of Religious Pluralism', in *The Jews among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire*, edited by Judith Lieu, John North, and Tessa Rajak, 174–93. London: Routledge, 1992.
- 'Roman Reactions to Empire', *Scripta classica Israelica*, 12 (1993): 127–38.
- 'Pagans, Polytheists and the Pendulum', in *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*, edited by William Vernon Harris, 125–43. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- 'Pagan Ritual and Monotheism', in *One God: Pagan Monotheism in the Roman Empire*, edited by Stephen Mitchell and Peter van Nuffelen, 34–52. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Noy, David. *Foreigners at Rome: Citizens and Strangers*. London: Duckworth, 2000.
- Nutton, Vivian. 'The Beneficial Ideology', in *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, edited by Peter Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker, 209–21. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- O'Donnell, James J. *Cassiodorus*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979.
- Orlin, Eric. *Temples, Religion and Politics in the Roman Republic*, Mnemosyne Supplements. Leiden: Brill, 1996.
- Osborne, Robin, and Barry Cunliffe, eds. *Mediterranean Urbanization 800–600 BC*, Proceedings of the British Academy. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Parker, Anthony John. *Ancient Shipwrecks of the Mediterranean and the Roman Provinces*, British Archaeological Reports International Series. Oxford: Tempus Reparatum, 1992.
- Paterson, Jeremy. 'Friends in High Places: The Creation of the Court of the Roman Emperor', in *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies*, edited by Antony Spawforth, 121–56. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982.
- Percival, John. *The Roman Villa: An Historical Introduction*. London:

- Batsford, 1976.
- Potter, David. *The Roman Empire at Bay: AD 180–395*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Potter, Tim. *Roman Italy*. London: British Museum Press, 1987.
- Preston, Rebecca. ‘Roman Questions, Greek Answers: Plutarch and the Construction of Identity’, in *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, edited by Simon Goldhill, 86–119. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Price, Simon. *Rituals and Power in Roman Asia Minor*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- ‘Local Mythologies in the Greek East’, in *Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces*, edited by Christopher Howgego, Volker Heuchert, and Andrew Burnett, 115–24. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- ‘Memory and Ancient Greece’, in *Religion and Society: Rituals, Resources and Identity in the Ancient Graeco-Roman World: The BOMOS Conferences 2002–5*, edited by Anders Holm Rasmussen and Suzanne William Rasmussen, 167–78. Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 2008.
- and Peter Thonemann. *The Birth of Classical Europe: A History from Troy to Augustine*, Penguin History of Europe. London: Allen Lane, 2010.
- Puett, Michael J. *To Become a God: Cosmology, Sacrifice, and Self-Divinization in Early China*, Harvard-Yenching Institute monograph series. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002.
- Purcell, Nicholas. ‘Livia and the Womanhood of Rome’, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 32 (1986): 78–105.
- ‘Mobility and the Polis’, in *The Greek City from Homer to Alexander*, edited by Oswyn Murray and Simon Price, 29–58. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- ‘The Creation of Provincial Landscape: The Roman Impact on Cisalpine Gaul’, in *The Early Roman Empire in the West*, edited by Tom Blagg and M. Millett, 7–29. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1990.
- ‘The Roman Villa and the Landscape of Production’, in *Urban Society in Roman Italy*, edited by Tim Cornell and Kathryn Lomas, 151–79. London: University College London Press, 1995.
- ‘On the Sacking of Carthage and Corinth’, in *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, edited by Doreen Innes, Harry Hine, and Christopher Pelling, 133–48. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
- ‘Wine and Wealth in Ancient Italy’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 75 (1985): 1–19.

- ‘Becoming Historical: The Roman Case’, in *Myth, History and Culture in Republican Rome: Studies in Honour of T. P. Wiseman*, edited by David Braund and Christopher Gill, 12–40. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2003.
- ‘The Way We Used to Eat: Diet, Community, and History at Rome’, *American Journal of Philology*, 124/3 (2003): 329–58.
- ‘The Boundless Sea of Unlikeness? On Defining the Mediterranean’, *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 18/2 (2004): 9–29.
- Quartermaine, Luisa. ‘“Slouching towards Rome”: Mussolini’s Imperial Vision’, in *Urban Society in Roman Italy*, edited by Tim Cornell and Kathryn Lomas, 203–15. London: University College London Press, 1995.
- Raaflaub, Kurt. ‘Born to be Wolves? Origins of Roman Imperialism’, in *Transitions to Empire: Essays in Greco-Roman History 360–146 B.C. in Honor of E. Badian*, edited by Robert W. Wallace and Edward M. Harris, 273–314. Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996.
- and Mark Toher, eds. *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and his Principate*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990.
- Rathbone, Dominic. ‘The Development of Agriculture in the Ager Cosanus during the Roman Republic: Problems of Evidence and Interpretation’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 71 (1981): 10–23.
- ‘The Slave Mode of Production in Italy’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 73 (1983): 160–8.
- ‘The Imperial Finances’, in *Cambridge Ancient History*, x: *The Augustan Empire 43 B.C. – A.D. 69*, edited by Alan Bowman, Edward Champlin, and Andrew Lintott, 309–23. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Rawson, Beryl, ed. *The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives*. London: Routledge, 1986.
- and P. R. C. Weaver, eds. *The Roman Family in Italy: Status, Sentiment and Space*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Rawson, Elizabeth. ‘Religion and Politics in the Late Second Century B.C. at Rome’, *Phoenix*, 28/2 (1974): 193–212.
- ‘Caesar’s Heritage: Hellenistic Kings and their Roman Equals’, *Journal of Roman Studies*, 65 (1975): 148–59.
- *Cicero: A Portrait*. London: Allen Lane, 1975.
- *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic*. London: Duckworth, 1985.
- ed. *Roman Culture and Society: Collected Papers*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

- Reece, Richard. 'Romanization, a Point of View', in *The Early Roman Empire in the West*, edited by Tom Blagg and Martin Millett, 30–4. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1990.
- Rees, Roger, ed. *Romane memento: Vergil in the Fourth Century*. London: Duckworth, 2003.
- *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy*, Debates and Documents in Ancient History. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004.
- Renfrew, Colin, and John F. Cherry, eds. *Peer Polity Interaction and Socio-political Change*, New Directions in Archaeology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Reynolds, Leighton D., and Nigel G. Wilson. *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*. 2nd edn., revised and enlarged. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974.
- Rhodes, Peter. 'After the Three-Bar Sigma Controversy: The History of Athenian Imperialism Reassessed', *Classical Quarterly*, 58/2 (2008): 501–6.
- Rich, John, ed. *The City in Late Antiquity*. Vol. iii, Leicester–Nottingham Studies in Ancient Society. London: Routledge, 1992.
- 'Fear, Greed and Glory: The Causes of Roman War-Making in the Middle Republic', in *War and Society in the Roman World*, edited by John Rich and Graham Shipley, 36–68. London: Routledge, 1993.
- and Graham Shipley, eds. *War and Society in the Roman World*, Nottingham–Leicester Studies in Ancient Society. London: Routledge, 1993.
- Richardson, John S. 'The Spanish Mines and the Development of Provincial Taxation in the Second Century B.C', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 66 (1976): 139–52.
- *Hispaniae: Spain and the Development of Roman Imperialism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- *The Language of Empire: Rome and the Idea of Empire from the Third Century BC to the Second Century AD*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Ridgway, David. *The First Western Greeks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Riggsby, Andrew. *War in Words: Caesar in Gaul and Rome*. Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2006.
- Riva, Corinna. *The Urbanization of Etruria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Rives, James B. 'The Decree of Decius and the Religion of Empire', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 89 (1999): 135–54.
- *Religion in the Roman Empire*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2007.
- Roller, Matthew B. *Constructing Autocracy: Aristocrats and Emperors in*

- Julio-Claudian Rome. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- Roselaar, Saskia T. *Public Land in the Roman Republic: A Social and Economic History of Ager Publicus in Italy, 396–89 BC*, Oxford Studies in Roman Society and Law. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Rosenstein, Nathan Stewart. *Rome at War: Farms, Families and Death in the Middle Republic*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- Roth, Ulrike. *Thinking Tools: Agricultural Slavery between Evidence and Models*, edited by Mike Edwards, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Supplements. London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2007.
- Roymans, Nico. *Tribal Societies in Northern Gaul: An Anthropological Perspective*, Cingula. Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam, Albert Egges van Giffen Instituut voor Prae- en Protohistorie, 1990.
- ed. *From the Sword to the Plough: Three Studies in the Earliest Romanisation of Northern Gaul*, Amsterdam Archaeological Studies. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996.
- Rüpke, Jörg. *Domi militiae: Die religiöse Konstruktion des Krieges im Rom*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 1990.
- *Religion of the Romans*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007.
- Sabin, Philip, Hans van Wees, and Michael Whitby, eds. *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Sahlins, Marshall. *Stone Age Economics*. London: Routledge, 1974.
- Sallares, Robert. *The Ecology of the Ancient Greek World*. London: Duckworth, 1991.
- ‘Ecology’, in *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*, edited by Walter Scheidel, Ian Morris, and Richard P. Saller, 15–37. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Saller, Richard P. *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- *Patriarchy, Property and Death in the Roman Family*, Cambridge Studies in Population Economy and Society in Past Time. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Salzman, Michele Renee. *The Making of a Christian Aristocracy: Social and Religious Change in the Western Roman Empire*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Sandwell, Isabella. *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews, and Christians in Antioch*, Greek Culture in the Roman World. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Sapelli, M., ed. *Provinciae fideles: Il fregio del tempio di Adriano in Campo*

- Marzio. Milan: Electa, 1999.
- Sawyer, Peter H., and Ian Wood, eds. *Early Medieval Kingship*. Leeds: The School of History, University of Leeds, 1977.
- Scheid, John. 'Graeco ritu: A Typically Roman Way of Honouring the Gods', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 97 Greece in Rome: Influence, Integration, Resistance (1995): 15–21.
- *Quand croire c'est faire: Les rites sacrificiels des Romains*. Paris: Aubier, 2005.
- Scheidel, Walter, ed. *Rome and China: Comparative Perspectives on Ancient World Empires*, Oxford Studies in Early Empires. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- and Sitta von Reden, eds. *The Ancient Economy*, Edinburgh Readings on the Ancient World. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002.
- Schnapp, Alain. *The Discovery of the Past*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997.
- Schneider, Rolf Michael. *Bunte Barbaren: Orientalenstatuen aus farbigem Marmor in der römischen Repräsentationskunst*. Worms: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1986.
- Schwartz, Seth. *Imperialism and Jewish Society 200 BCE to 640 CE*, edited by R. Stephen Humphreys, William Chester Jordan, and Peter Schäfer, Jews, Christians and Muslims from the Ancient to the Modern World. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- Scobie, Alexander. *Hitler's State Architecture: The Impact of Classical Antiquity*, Monographs on the Fine Arts. University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990.
- Scullard, H. H. *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome from 133 BC to AD 68*. 5th edn. London: Routledge, 1982.
- Seager, Robin. *Pompey the Great: A Political Biography*. 2nd edn. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.
- Sedley, David. 'Philosophical Allegiance in the Greco-Roman World', in *Philosophia togata I: Essays on Philosophy and Roman Society*, edited by Miriam Griffin and Jonathon Barnes, 97–119. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- *Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Shaw, Brent D. '“Eaters of flesh, drinkers of milk”: The Ancient Mediterranean Ideology of the Pastoral Nomad', *Ancient Society*, 13 (1982): 5–31.
- 'Soldiers and Society: The Army in Numidia', *Opus*, 2 (1983): 133–9.
- *Environment and Society in Roman North Africa: Studies in History and Archaeology*, Variorum Reprints. Aldershot: Variorum, 1995.

- Sherwin-White, A. N. *The Roman Citizenship*. 2nd edn. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973.
- 'The Lex Repetundarum and the Political Ideas of Gaius Gracchus', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 72 (1982): 18–31.
- Shipley, Graham. *The Greek World after Alexander, 323–30 B.C.* London: Routledge, 2000.
- and John Salmon, eds. *Human Landscapes in Classical Antiquity: Environment and Culture*, vol. vi, Leicester–Nottingham Studies in Ancient Society. London: Routledge, 1996.
- Sider, David. *The Library of the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum*. Los Angeles: Getty, 2005.
- Slater, William J., ed. *Dining in a Classical Context*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991.
- Smith, Christopher. *Early Rome and Latium: Economy and Society c.1000–500 BC*, Oxford Classical Monographs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- 'The Beginnings of Urbanization in Rome', in *Mediterranean Urbanization 800–600 BC*, edited by Robin Osborne and Barry Cunliffe, 91–111. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Smith, Jonathon Z. *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990.
- Smith, Julia M. H., ed. *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West: Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough*, The Medieval Mediterranean. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- *Europe after Rome: A New Cultural History, 500–1000*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Smith, R. R. R. 'The Imperial Reliefs from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 77 (1987): 88–138.
- 'Simulacra gentium: The Ethne from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 78 (1988): 50–77.
- Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind*, Mentor Books. New York: New American Library, 1964.
- Spawforth, Antony. 'Symbol of Unity? The Persian-Wars Tradition in the Roman Empire', in *Greek Historiography*, edited by Simon Hornblower, 233–47. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.
- ed. *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Spence, Jonathon. *Emperor of China: Self Portrait of K'ang-hsi*. London: Cape, 1974.
- Stadter, Philip A. *Arrian of Nicomedia*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.

- Steel, Catherine. *Cicero, Rhetoric and Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Stein-Hölkeskamp, Elke, and Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp, eds. *Erinnerungsorte der Antike: Die römische Welt*. Munich: C. H. Beck Verlag, 2006.
- Strasburger, Hermann. 'Poseidonios on Problems of the Roman Empire', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 55/1–2 (1965): 40–53.
- Swain, Simon. *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism and Power in the Greek World, AD 50–250*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1996.
- 'Bilingualism in Cicero? The Evidence of Code-Switching', in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Text*, edited by J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain, 128–67. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- and Mark Edwards, eds. *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Sweetman, Rebecca J. 'Roman Knossos: The Nature of a Globalized City', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 111/1 (2007): 61–81.
- Syme, Ronald. *The Roman Revolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939.
- Tainter, Joseph A. *The Collapse of Complex Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Talbert, Richard J. A. *The Senate of Imperial Rome*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Tchernia, André. *Le Vin d'Italie romaine: Essai d'histoire économique d'après les amphores*, Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome. Rome: École Française de Rome, 1986.
- Thomas, Edmund. *Monumentality and the Roman Empire: Architecture in the Antonine Age*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Thomas, Robert, and Andrew Wilson. 'Water Supply for Roman Farms in Latium and South Etruria', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 62 (1994): 139–96.
- Thommen, Lukas. *Umweltgeschichte der Antike*. Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2009.
- Torelli, Mario. *Studies in the Romanization of Italy*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1995.
- Treggiari, Susan M. *Roman Freedmen during the Late Republic*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969.
- Tsetskhladze, Gocha R. *Greek Colonisation: An Account of Greek Colonies and Other Settlements Overseas*. 2 vols., Mnemosyne supplements. Leiden: Brill, 2006.
- Van Dam, Raymond. *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul*,

- Transformation of the Classical Heritage. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985.
- van Nijf, Onno. 'Local Heroes: Athletics, Festivals and Elite Self-Fashioning in the Roman East', in *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, edited by Simon Goldhill, 309–34. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- van Sickle, J. 'The Elogia of the Corneli Scipiones and the Origins of Epigram at Rome', *American Journal of Philology*, 108 (1987): 41–55.
- Vasunia, Phiroze. 'The Comparative Study of Empires', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 101 (2011): 222–37.
- Versnel, H. S. *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion 1: Ter unus: Isis, Dionysos, Hermes; Three Studies in Henotheism*, Studies in Greek and Roman Religion. Leiden: Brill, 1990.
- Veyne, Paul. *Le Pain et le cirque: Sociologie historique d'un pluralisme politique*. Paris: Seuil, 1976.
- *Did the Greeks Believe in their Myths? An Essay in the Constitutive Imagination*, translated by Paula Wissing. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.
- Wallace-Hadrill, Andrew. 'Family and Inheritance in the Augustan Marriage-Laws', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 207 (1981): 58–80.
- 'Civilis princeps: Between Citizen and King', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 72 (1982): 32–48.
- 'The Golden Age and Sin in Augustan Ideology', *Past and Present*, 95 (1982): 19–36.
- *Suetonius: The Scholar and his Caesars*, Classical Life and Letters. London: Duckworth, 1983.
- 'Review Article: Greek Knowledge, Roman Power', *Classical Philology*, 83/3 (1988): 224–33.
- ed. *Patronage in Ancient Society*. London: Routledge, 1989.
- 'Elites and Trade in the Roman Town', in *City and Country in the Ancient World*, edited by John Rich and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 241–72. London: Routledge, 1991.
- *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- 'The Imperial Court', in *Cambridge Ancient History*, x: *The Augustan Empire 43 B.C.–A.D. 69*, edited by Alan Bowman, Edward Champlin, and Andrew Lintott, 283–308. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- *Rome's Cultural Revolution*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

- Ward-Perkins, Bryan. *From Classical Antiquity to the Middle Ages: Urban Public Building in Northern and Central Italy AD 300–850*, Oxford Historical Monographs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Ward-Perkins, J. B. 'From Republic to Empire: Reflections on the Early Provincial Architecture of the Roman West', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 60 (1970): 1–19.
- Weaver, P. R. C. *Familia Caesaris: A Social Study of the Emperor's Freedmen and Slaves*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.
- Whitmarsh, Tim. *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- ed. *Local Knowledge and Microidentities in the Imperial Greek World*, Greek Culture in the Roman World. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Whittaker, C. R. *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: A Social and Economic Study*, Ancient Society and History. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.
- Whittow, Mark. 'Ruling the Late Roman and Early Byzantine City: A Continuous History', *Past and Present*, 129 (1990): 3–29.
- Wickham, Chris. *Early Medieval Italy: Central Power and Local Society 400–1000* London: Macmillan, 1981.
- 'The Other Transition: From the Ancient World to Feudalism', *Past and Present*, 103 (1984): 3–36.
- *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- *The Inheritance of Rome: A History of Europe from 400 to 1000*, Penguin History of Europe. London: Allen Lane, 2009.
- Wierschowski, L. *Fremde in Gallien—'Gallier' in der Fremde: Die epigraphisch bezeugte Mobilität in, von und nach Gallien vom 1. bis 3. Jh. n. Chr. (Texte— Übersetzungen—Kommentare)*. Vol. 159, Historia Einzelschriften. Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2001.
- Wiesehöfer, Josef, ed. *Die Partherreich und seine Zeugnisse*, Historia Einzelschriften. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998.
- Wightman, Edith Mary. *Roman Trier and the Treveri*. London: Hart-Davis, 1970.
- Williams, Jonathon H. C. *Beyond the Rubicon: Romans and Gauls in Northern Italy*, Oxford Classical Monographs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Wilson, Andrew. 'Machines, Power and the Ancient Economy', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 92 (2002): 1–32.
- 'Approaches to Quantifying Roman Trade', in *Quantifying the Roman Economy: Methods and Problems*, edited by Alan Bowman and Andrew Wilson, 213–49. Oxford: Oxford University Press,

2009.

- Winterling, Aloys. *Aula Caesaris: Studien zur Institutionalisierung des römischen Kaiserhofes in der Zeit von Augustus bis Commodus (31 v. Chr.–192 n. Chr.)*. Munich: R. Oldenburg, 1999.
- Wiseman, T. Peter. 'Domi nobiles and the Roman Cultural Élite', in *Les Bourgeoisies municipales italiennes aux II^e et I^{er} siècles av. J.-C.*, edited by M. Cébeillac-Gervason, 299–307. Naples: Éditions du CNRS & Bibliothèque de l'Institut Français de Naples, 1981.
- *Remus: A Roman Myth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- *The Myths of Rome*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2004.
- Witcher, Robert. 'Globalisation and Roman Imperialism: Perspectives on Identities in Roman Italy', in *The Emergence of State Identities in Italy in the First Millennium B.C.*, edited by Edward Herring and Kathryn Lomas, 213–25. London: Accordia Research Institute, 2000.
- Wittfogel, Karl August. *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power*. New York: Yale University Press, 1957.
- Wood, Ian. 'Defining the Franks: Frankish Origins in Early Mediaeval Historiography', in *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages*, edited by Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson, and Alan V. Murray, 47–57. Leeds: Leeds University Press, 1995.
- Wood, Susan. 'Messalina, Wife of Claudius: Propaganda Successes and Failures of his Reign', *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 5 (1992): 219–34.
- 'Diva Drusilla Panthea and the Sisters of Caligula', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 99/3 (1995): 457–82.
- Woolf, Greg. 'Imperialism, Empire and the Integration of the Roman Economy', *World Archaeology*, 23/3 (1992): 283–93.
- 'Becoming Roman, Staying Greek: Culture, Identity and the Civilizing Process in the Roman East', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 40 (1994): 116–43.
- 'Monumental Writing and the Expansion of Roman Society', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 86 (1996): 22–39.
- 'The Uses of Forgetfulness in Roman Gaul', in *Vergangenheit und Lebenswelt: Soziale Kommunikation, Traditionsbildung und historisches Bewußtsein*, edited by Hans-Joachim Gehrke and Astrid Möller, 361–81. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1996.
- 'The Roman Urbanization of the East', in *The Early Roman Empire in the East*, edited by Susan E. Alcock, 1–14. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1997.
- 'The City of Letters', in *Rome the Cosmopolis*, edited by Catharine Edwards and Greg Woolf, 203–21. Cambridge: Cambridge

- University Press, 2003.
- *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- ‘Divinity and Power in Ancient Rome’, in *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and beyond*, edited by Nicole Brisch, 235–55. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2008.
- *Tales of the Barbarians: Ethnography and Empire in the Roman West*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2011.
- Wörrle, Michael. *Stadt und Fest in kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien: Studien zu einer agonistischen Stiftung aus Oinoanda, Vestigia*. Munich: C. H. Beck, 1988.
- Yarrow, Liv Maria. *Historiography at the End of the Republic: Provincial Perspectives on Roman Rule*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Yates, R. D. S. ‘Cosmos, Central Authority and Communities in the Early Chinese Empire’, in *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History*, edited by Susan E. Alcock, T. D’Altroy, K. D. Morrison, and C. M. Sinopoli, 351–68. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Yavetz, Zvi. *Plebs and Princeps*. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.
- Yegul, Fikret K. *Baths and Bathing in the Roman World*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992.
- Yoffee, Norman, and George L. Cowgill, eds. *The Collapse of Ancient States and Civilizations*. Tucson, Ariz.: University of Arizona Press, 1988.
- Zanker, Paul. ‘Domitian’s Palace on the Palatine and the Imperial Image’, in *Representations of Empire: Rome and the Mediterranean World*, edited by Alan Bowman, Hannah Cotton, Martin Goodman, and Simon Price, 105–30. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, Jerome Lectures. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988.
- Zarmakoupi, Mantha, ed. *The Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum: Archaeology, Reception and Digital Reconstruction*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010.
- Zuiderhoek, Arjan. *The Politics of Munificence in the Roman Empire: Citizens, Elites and Benefactors in Asia Minor*, Greek Culture in the Roman World. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Glossary of Technical Terms

The best place to find full information on Roman institutions is the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (4th edition, 2012). This glossary is designed to help explain terms used in the text.

Adventus The ceremonial entrance of an emperor into a city. The emperor would be welcomed by crowds and speeches, and might hand out gifts to the people. The theme is common on Roman imperial coinages and the ceremony became especially important in the late empire.

ager publicus Land owned by the state, mostly acquired by conquest and leased out to citizens in return for rents (*vectigalia*).

censor During the Republican period a pair of censors were elected for eighteen months every five years from among the most senior senators. Their duties included reviewing the membership of the senate and equestrian orders, assigning all citizens to their correct political orders and issuing contracts for public works. They also came to exercise moral authority. Under the principate a few emperors took the power of censors or held censorships, and in practice assumed many of their functions.

census Originally the head-count of citizens conducted every year by the censors who also assigned each citizen into an order based on the amount of property he owned. The term later came to be used for periodic assessments of tax-liability in the provinces.

centurions The main officers of the legions whose expertise was vital given the aristocratic commanders were often relatively inexperienced. Most centurions commanded units of 80-100 men, and during the Republic were selected from the most experienced soldiers. Under the principate an elaborate hierarchy of ranks and pay developed, and senior centurions were often detached to act as administrators of various kinds.

consul From the early Republic two consuls were elected every year and jointly acted as chief magistrates of the Roman state. Their duties included convening the senate, presiding at major rituals, leading armies and holding elections.

curiales Members of the councils of provincial cities in the Roman empire. The Greek equivalent term was *bouleutai*. These groups were in effect local equivalents of the senatorial order in Rome and like them were recruited from the propertied classes.

dictator During times of military emergencies a single dictator was

elected in place of the consuls for a limited period only. The term was later appropriated first by Sulla and then Julius Caesar to provide a traditional name for their control of the state.

equites The richest citizens of the Republic were enrolled in the equestrian order from which senators were elected. Equites are also sometimes termed knights, and at times the term equestrian is used to designate any citizen with the requisite property qualification, whether or not they had been formally enrolled as *equites equo publico*. Augustus created a new senatorial order above the equestrian one, for which the property qualification was higher, and gave both orders specific roles in the government of the empire and the ceremonial of the city.

fascēs The attendants of consuls and dictators carried before them an axe bound together into a bundle of rods as a symbol of power.

hoplite A Greek term for a heavy-armed infantryman who fought hand to hand in a close formation termed a phalanx.

imperium The term originally meant a command, both one issued and one given to a general. Holding *imperium* conferred a range of religious and political powers and obligations, and so it was formally assumed at the start of a campaign and laid down at the end of one. The term was extended to mean the authority of the Roman people, and at the end of the Republic came to be used in the term of the territory subject to the commands of the Romans, from which our sense of territorial empire derives.

legate A legate meant a Roman assigned a particular task by the state. Some legates were effectively ambassadors sent to conduct negotiations, some (*legati legionis*) were commanders assigned to legions, and from the last century BC there were also legates assigned to govern parts of very large provinces, such as that awarded to the emperor.

legion From the middle Republic until the late empire, the Roman army was based on units of around 5,000 heavily armed infantrymen, each of which was termed a legion. Typically these units were supported by light infantry, missile troops, cavalry, engineers and other auxiliaries.

magister officiorum Senior official in the bureaucracy of the late empire and the Ostrogothic kingdom of Italy.

magistrate An official of the Roman state elected by the whole community. The most important magistrates were (in descending order) censors, consuls, praetors and aediles. A dictator or an interrex (a person appointed solely to hold elections) were magistrates, but tribunes (elected only by the plebeians) were not.

patricians This inner circle of families within the equestrian order

claimed descent from the aristocracy of the Regal Period. During the Republic they gradually lost control of a monopoly of magistracies but even under the principate some priesthoods were reserved for patricians. The emperors occasionally created new patricians, as an honour and to provide sufficient for the various patrician priesthoods.

plebeians All members of the Roman state who were not patricians. Tradition recorded a number of conflicts between patricians and plebeians during the early Republic (known collectively as the Struggle of the Orders) through which the prerogatives of the patricians were reduced and the rights of the plebeians recognised, for example in the institution of the tribunate or in the convention that votes of the plebeians (*plebiscita*) were binding on the entire state.

pontifex maximus The most senior priest of the college of pontiffs, and holder of the most prestigious priesthood in Rome. As well as presiding over the pontiffs he also supervised a number of other priests including the priestesses of Vesta.

populares During the last century of the Republic a series of senatorial politicians, of whom the most famous were the Gracchi brothers and Julius Caesar, based their political programme on fighting for the interest of the Roman people. Land-distributions, colonial schemes, and subsidized or free grain were distinctive features of their activities but in practice they became involved in all political debates, often using popular assemblies to outflank their opponents (who adopted the name *Optimates*). This conflict contributed to the civil strife of the late Republic.

praetor A magistrate of the Roman state. After the creation of the consulship the praetors were the more junior magistrates and had a range of judicial, administrative and military responsibilities. The number of praetors and the diversity of their roles increased as the city and empire expanded.

praetorian prefect The main bodyguard of the emperors were the praetorian cohorts and their commanders were equestrian prefects. From as early as the reign of Tiberius they came not only to control security in the City (and around the emperor when he was away from it) but also to act as the chief equestrian advisors to the emperor, and effectively as viziers or chief ministers of the imperial court. From the early fourth century AD the empire was divided in praetorian prefectures within which each prefect headed the imperial bureaucracy.

princeps Literally the first (most senior) senator, the title was adopted by Augustus and his successors as a more neutral alternative to *rex* (king), *dictator* or perpetual consul.

promagistrate Originally Roman armies were commanded by consuls and praetors but after imperial expansion made this impractical, the senate began to ask former magistrates to take on commands. By the late Republic magistracies seem often to have been regarded as a necessary preliminary to winning a major command, and consuls drew lots for the commands prepared for them. Under the principate the most senior governors (for example of Africa, Asia and Achaëa) were Proconsuls, and less senior posts went to proprætors, the emperors reserving for themselves one vast province which they governed through legates (*legati Augusti pro prætore*).

provincia Originally the task assigned along with imperium to a magistrate or pro-magistrate (e.g. the war with Antiochus, the command of Sicily), the term eventually acquired the sense of a territorial unit within the empire, hence the modern term “province”.

publicanus A Roman citizen who had contracted with the state to carry out work, for example provisioning an army, building or repairing a temple or basilica or road, or collecting taxes. The most notorious publicans were the tax-farmers, whose brutality and greed in the later Republic became proverbial.

senate The council of the Roman state, composed mostly of ex-magistrates but topped up every five-years by the censors from those with the appropriate census qualification.

spolia opima An exceptional honour granted to generals who had killed their counterparts in single combat. Augustus claimed they had to fight under their own auspices to qualify.

tetrarchy In the aftermath of the military crisis of the third century AD, the empire was for a while ruled by colleges of emperors, originally comprising a pair of senior emperors (termed *Augusti*) and a pair of junior ones (*Caesares*) who were also their designated heirs. The term “tetrarchy” refers both to this short-lived institution and to the period, while “tetrach” refers to one member of the college. Both joint rule and the distinction between *Augusti* and *Caesares* had earlier precedents, but before Diocletian power was always shared between relatives rather than political allies. That was the case once again by the late fourth century AD.

tribune of the People (*tribunus plebis*) An annually elected position created during the Republic to protect the rights of the plebeians against the patricians. Tribunes’ persons were sacrosanct and they had the right to call assemblies and to veto legislation and the acts of magistrates if they thought them against the interests of the plebeians. During the last century of the Republic the post was used first by the Gracchi and other popularis politicians as a means of

passing legislation the senate might not agree to and later by generals in order to have a veto to protect their interests. The emperors appropriated the sacrosanctity of tribunes as one of their powers, and dated their regnal year by the number of annual grants of tribunicial power they had received.

triumph This ritual which included a great procession into the city might be awarded to a general who had won a significant victory. The procession was often accompanied by games, banqueting, and extended public holidays. Under the principate only emperors and their relatives celebrated triumphs.

Photographic Acknowledgements

© The Art Archive/Alamy: **23**; © Erin Babnik/Alamy: **9**; © charistooneimages/Alamy: **19**; © Peter Horree/Alamy: **7**; © Independent Picture Service/Alamy: **16**; © Mastercraft/Alamy: **13**; © Alex Segre/Alamy: **22**; © Skyscan Photolibrary/Alamy: **17**; computer visualisation created by Martin Blazeby, King's College London: **11**; The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (MS Canon Misc. 378 f.164v): **20**; © Alinari/Bridgeman Art Library: **18**; © The Trustees of the British Museum. All rights reserved: **14**; © Sandro Vannini/Corbis: **10**; © Charles Crowther and Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents, Oxford: **15**; © DEA/A. Dagli Orti/Getty Images: **3**; © Sebastià Giralt: **6**; © Bildarchiv Foto Marburg: **4**; © 2011 Scala, Florence: **5**; © 2011 The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource/Scala, Florence: **8, 12**; © age fotostock/SuperStock: **1, 21, 24**

We apologize for any errors or omissions in the above list. If contacted we shall be pleased to rectify these at the earliest opportunity.

Index

- Abbasid Caliphate 21, 104
- Achaean League 70, 67–8, 100
- Aemilius Paullus 68, 69, 153, 172
- Aeneas 14, 16, 17
- agriculture, *see* economy; taxation
- Alamanni 213–5, 247, 275
- Alexander the Great
 - career 19, 26, 36, 64, 126
 - as a model conqueror 71, 140
- allies
 - Roman relations with 41–2
 - see also* Social War
- Ammianus Marcellinus 242
- antiquarianism 122–3
 - see also* Varro
- Arab conquests 21, 187
- army
 - equipment, organization and tactics 41–2, 74–5, 207–11
 - political role 132–3, 135
 - veterans 117, 131, 141, 196, 221–2
- Athens 34, 64, 111, 130, 267
- Augustine 122, 255–6, 259
- Augustus (Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus)
 - honours after at Actium 84, 116, 125, 166
 - imperialism 166–7, 201–5
 - life and career 14–16, 165–9
 - religious authority 123–6
 - reorganization of the military 92, 166–8
 - reorganization of taxation 196–8
 - Ausonius 242, 252
- autocracy, *see* emperors
- Aztec empire 24, 73, 121, 187
- bathing 222–5

Britain, conquest of 82, 202
bureaucracy 11, 187–8, 196, 242–3, 248–51, 275, 282–4

capstone monarchy 176–8, 274

Caracalla's Edict (Constitutio Antoniniana) 7, 121, 219, 246, 261

Carthage 14, 18, 40–1, 64–5, 70, 194

Cassiodorus 273, 275–6, 281, 289

Catilinarian conspiracy 85, 133, 149

Cato the Elder 18, 69, 71, 86, 87–8, 99

ceremonial 19–21, 26, 117–18, 125, 166–8, 180–1, 236, 245–6, 277, 285

see also triumph

Chinese Empires 26, 37, 73, 104, 175, 183, 186–7, 203, 210–13, 274, 297

Christians

communities of 213, 256

early growth in numbers 258–61

in historiography 234–5, 255–6, 278, 298

persecutions by 10, 235, 266–8

persecutions of 121, 123, 234–5, 246, 260, 262–3, 266, 277

see also heresy; schisms

Cicero (Marcus Tullius Cicero)

philosophical writings 120, 157–9

political career 16, 85, 133–4, 137–8, 140–1, 148–152

Cimbric Wars 105, 135

citizenship 83, 114, 219–222

see also Social War

civil wars

Antony and Octavian versus Brutus and Cassius 141

Antony versus Octavian 141–2

following death of Domitian 172

following death of Nero 169–70

of the fourth century 237–8, 247

of the third century 215–16

Pompey versus Caesar 141

provincial experience of 142–3

Severan 172

civilization, Roman ideas of 56, 82, 146, 159, 220, 225–6, 251–3

climate change 50–2, 192–3, 279

- colonization, Roman 42, 65, 130, 141, 152
- comparative historical analysis 25–7
- conquest state 26, 98, 187, 197, 203, 247, 280
- Constantine 27, 206–7, 212, 234–8, 243–6, 252, 263–8
- Constantinople 20–21, 174, 183, 237, 267–8, 276–7, 284
- cosmopolitanism 227
- court 180–3
 - see also* ceremonial; emperors; monarchy
- Corinth 34–5, 70–1, 77, 92, 295
- Cornelii Scipiones 77–80
 - see also* Scipio Aemilianus; Scipio Africanus
- Crassus (Marcus Licinius Crassus) 133–6, 140
- Decius 121, 277
- dining 225–6
- Diocletian 11, 193, 216, 234–9, 241–7
- disease
 - endemic 52–3, 56, 58, 278
 - epidemic/plague 192, 262, 278–9
- dynastic succession 169–73
- early Rome
 - archaeology of 32–7
 - historical tradition 37–40
 - institutions 41–2
- ecology 48–61
- economy
 - agricultural systems 52–6, 83, 87–91
 - intensification 57–61, 189, 191
 - political economy 193–8
 - role of slaves 86–93
 - trends 188–93
 - see also* taxation
- education 14, 152, 225, 248, 253
- Egypt
 - Ptolemaic Kingdom of 64, 66, 68, 188, 196
 - under Roman rule 125–6, 188
- emperors 163–84
- empire

modern definitions of 19–27
reasons for collapse 273–5
Roman ideologies of 13–19, 71–2, 150–2
 see also virtue
Ennius (Quintus Ennius) 18, 39, 120, 296–7
environmental history 49–52
 see also climate change
Etruscans 33–40
Eusebius of Caesarea 234–7, 246, 260–2, 266, 268

Fabius Pictor 18, 38, 44, 117, 120, 153
family 77–8, 83–4, 172–3
fascism 23–4
Flamininus (Titus Quinctius Flamininus) 67
Florus 201
Franks 11, 20–21, 214–5, 237, 251, 253, 277, 290, 299
Fulvius Nobilior (Marcus Fulvius Nobilior) 18, 68, 296

Gaius Sempronius Gracchus (tribune of 123) 107, 116, 136–7
Gallic Sack of Rome 38–9, 105
Gaul, conquest of 105–6, 135
geology 49–50
Germany, conquest of 167, 202–5
globalization 227–9, 257–8
Goths 214–15, 239–40, 251–3, 275–6, 281–3, 289
Greek colonization 33, 36
Greek Culture in Rome and Italy 147–8, 152–7, 226, 241
gymnasium 224

Hadrian 7, 172, 183, 202, 208, 226, 242, 263
Hannibal 18, 47, 65
hegemonic power 40–5, 71–5, 98–9, 103–6
heresy 235, 237, 253, 260–1, 266–8, 285–6
Holocene 52–3, 55
Homer 14, 17
Horace 158, 166, 288, 296
Huns 239–40
hybrid vigour 36–7

Ibn Khaldun 104

identity 218–229, 248

imperialism

British 22–3, 82–3

ecological 56–61, 104–5

modern imperialisms 21–2, 227

modern theories of, 24–27

see also Augustus, imperialism; empire; hegemonic power; Roman imperialism

Inka 24–5, 73, 175, 186, 187, 274

itinerant monarchy 7, 182–3, 186, 206–7, 236

Italy, conquest of 37–45, 65

Jews 120–2, 170, 212–13, 221, 228–9, 238, 256–60, 266–8, 290

Jugurtha, Numidian prince 85, 101–2, 105

Julian 238–9, 246, 266

Julius Caesar (Gaius Julius Caesar) 14, 19, 124, 130, 134–6, 155

Justinian 20, 115, 267, 276–81, 285–6

Late Empire 9–12, 241–51

Latial Culture 33–6

Lenin 26, 27

Livy (Titus Livius) 16, 116

Lombards 275–7

Macedon, Antigonid Kingdom of 44, 64, 66–9, 194

Magna Graecia (Greek cities of southern Italy) 33–4, 42–5

maladministration (by provincial governors) 77, 85, 107, 108, 137–8, 150–1

Manichaeans 213, 256–66

Manlius Vulso 68, 100, 106

Marcus Aurelius 8, 172, 206, 214, 242

Marius (Gaius Marius) 102, 106–111, 129–30

Marseilles 33, 40, 64, 100, 105, 157, 282

Mithridates V of Pontus 102

Mithridates VI of Pontus 102, 111, 129–30, 133, 136, 139, 152, 157, 188

mobility 227–8

monarchy 173–9

see also emperors; itinerant monarchy; Regal Period;

Napoleon 21–2

Neolithic Revolution 52–3

notitia dignitatum 249

Osteria dell'Osa 32

Ostia 36

patrimonialism, *see* family; patronage

patronage

 artistic 83, 153–7, 164

 political 84–6, 116, 136, 177–8

Paul of Tarsus 221

peer-polity interaction 36

Pergamum, Attalid kingdom of 66, 68, 70, 76, 77, 100–2, 106, 194–5

Persian Empires 9, 26, 36–7, 104, 126, 186–7, 215, 239, 262, 274, 278

philosophy 109, 119–120, 153, 155–8, 238–9, 257, 267, 297

see also Cicero, philosophical writings

Phoenician expansion 33

Phoenician gods 40, 119

Pietrabbondante 39

piracy 92, 107, 138–9

plague *see* disease

Pliny the Elder 32, 48, 88, 220, 292

Pliny the Younger 18, 224–5, 261

political growth in the Mediterranean World 36–7, 64

Polybius of Megalopolis 38, 40, 44, 63, 68, 69, 71, 75, 97, 113–14, 153, 233

polytheism 118–21

Pompey (Gaius Pompeius) 132, 133–6, 138–9

 Theatre of Pompey 146–7

populares 107–10, 130

see also Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus

postcolonialism 227

priesthoods 78, 80, 108, 118

Procopius 115, 276, 278, 281

provincial government 137–9, 142–3, 150–2, 242–3

see also maladministration

provincial revolts 185, 188, 209–10, 212

Principate 5–9, 164

Punic Wars, *see* Carthage; Hannibal

Pyrrhus, King of Epirus 42–5

receptions of Roman imperialism 19–23

Regal Period 1–2, 37–8

religious responses to empire 72–3, 113–26

religious system (traditional Roman) 113, 117–18, 122–3

see also polytheism; priesthoods

religious trends 119–20, 228–9, 256–8

Rhodes

as a naval power 64, 66, 68, 69–70, 92, 99, 138–9

as an intellectual centre 153, 155–7

Roman imperialism

economics of 75–7, 185–8

explanations of 40–2, 71–5

institutionalization of empire 203

see also tributary empire

periodization 143–5

see also imperialism; empire, Roman ideologies of

Roman Republic 2–5

Rome, city of

demographic growth 32–6, 87–8, 110, 190–1

monuments 14, 17, 75–6, 122, 146–7, 166, 170, 194, 223–4, 294–8

Romulus 16–17

Sallust (Gaius Sallustius) 101–2, 106, 114, 142, 152

Samnite Wars 39

Saturninus (Lucius Appuleius Saturninus) 108–9

schisms 237, 260–2, 265, 268, 285–6

Scipio Aemilianus (Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus) 4, 38, 69, 80, 85, 97, 172

Scipio Africanus (Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus) 4, 65–7, 78–9, 172

senate(s) 3, 75–6, 107–9, 118, 130, 132, 137, 166–7, 173–4, 206–7, 245

Sidonius Apollinaris 252, 284, 298

slavery 82–93, 194, 196, 208, 219

imperial slaves 167–8, 177, 180–2, 209
 see also economy, role of slaves
social mobility viii, 247–9, 296
Social War 108–111
Spain, conquest of 64–6, 104
Spartacus slave war 92, 133
Sulla (Lucius Cornelius Sulla) 5, 111, 129–31
 legacy 131–33
Syracuse 40, 44, 64–5, 76, 157, 194
Syria, Seleucid Kingdom of 64, 67–8, 70, 99, 101–2, 175, 182, 194, 274

Tacitus (Publicus Cornelius Tacitus) 82, 185, 218
taxation 26, 57, 75–6, 185–98, 247
tax-farmers 76, 108, 137–8, 151, 187–8
technology
 construction 59–60
 metallurgical 26, 55
 military 74–5, 212–14
 transfers of 8, 53, 55, 58–9, 104, 211–13, 222–3, 248, 292–3
 transport 186
Tetrarchy 236–7, 242–6, 252, 262
Theodosian Code 249–51
Third Century Crisis 212–17
Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus (tribune of 133) 77, 100, 107, 194
Timaeus of Tauromenium 38, 44–5
Trajan 7–8, 172, 183, 197, 201–3, 206, 224, 261, 297
tributary empires 24–7, 185–8, 197, 211, 274
triumph (rituals of) 19, 72–3, 84, 117, 122, 166, 246, 295
Troy 14, 16, 17, 31, 152, 229, 289
Turks, as successors of Rome 21

urban decline 191–3, 212, 248, 273, 280–3
urban growth 33–5, 60–1, 87–8, 191–2

Vandals 251–2, 255, 256, 276
Varro (Marcus Terentiu Varro) 16, 88, 122–3
Veii 34–5, 36, 37, 38, 39
Virgil's *Aeneid* 13–17, 117

virtue 114–17, 234–5

warfare 201–17

see also army

Zoroastrianism 9

Zosimus 233, 240, 241